Frederick Corbett
July 2nd 1874.

J.G.L. Eaton.

Left 8th 1908.

ADVENTURES IN SWITZERLAND.

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THE

H ALPS WITHOUT GUIDES:

BEING

NARRATIVE OF ADVENTURES IN SWITZERLAND,

ER WITH CHAPTERS ON THE PRACTICABILITY OF SUCH MODE OF MOUNTAINEERING, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT.

BY

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'Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam
Multa tulit fecitque.' HORACE.

WITH A FRONTISPIECE AND TWO MAPS.

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1870.

PREFACE.

THE exquisite pleasure which the Alps have, year by year, afforded to the Author, induces him to place this volume before the public.

In it he has endeavoured to point out the advantages of mountaineering as a means of recreation, and the possibility of indulging in it to a very great extent without the cost or the annoyances of professional assistance.

The first chapter discusses these questions theoretically; those which follow narrate some of the more interesting adventures which have befallen the Author when (with two exceptions) without guides, and practically illustrate the possibility of such mountaineering. The work closes with a chapter of hints, many of which may be useful to all mountaineers—whether with or without guides—who are but beginners. At the end of each section will be

found, when I have been able to ascertain the facts, a statement of the number of guides usually taken for the expedition described, with their ordinary charges exclusive of food.

It should be stated, as adding force to my argument, that except in the case of the Strahleck, of so much of the Clariden Grat as coincides with the Sand Grat Pass, and of the Zermatt side of the Col d'Herens, the Author had never, previously to the expedition described, traversed any of the routes given in this book.

Nothing short of the Ordnance charts would enable a reader to follow minutely the track of the Author, but this is shown sufficiently for recognition by red lines on the annexed maps, kindly lent for this volume by the Publishers.

My best thanks are due to the Rev. C. B. Hutchinson of Rugby, to Mr. Fayle, one of my fellow-travellers in 1869, and to others, for their assistance, during my absence from England, in passing this work through the Press; also to Professsor Tyndall for his kindness in looking through the concluding chapter, 'Suggestions to Alpine Tourists,' notwithstanding the great pressure of work

upon him. I was anxious, for the sake of any who may consult this chapter practically, to obtain the criticisms of so eminent a mountaineer, although he is in no degree to be held responsible for expressing any opinion on the principle of dispensing with guides.

If it were fashionable to dedicate books, this volume would certainly be addressed to those who are in that happy time and state of life which were the fortune of the writer when most of the adventures recounted occurred—namely, to the Undergraduates of the University of Oxford.

ATHENS:
March 14, 1870.

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CHAPTER I.

MOUNTAINEERING WITHOUT GUIDES.

'De l'audace, de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace.'—*Paris en Amérique.*

SWITZERLAND has now become to Englishmen a great play-ground; and probably among the better-educated and more wealthy classes there are few families some member of which does not make an occasional pilgrimage, staff in hand, to this great shrine of health and vigour. Some more—some less—worthy of the name of mountaineer, they seek recreation and exercise in such way as each sees fit: some are content to cross, with mule or porter, the easy gradients of the Tête Noir, or Wengern Alp, others, satisfied only with the exhilarating air and exciting toils of the higher Alps, brace themselves up with the mental champagne afforded by glaciers and snow peaks. To many a home, therefore, does the occasional news of some great Alpine disaster come like the boom of a signal

gun to anxious watchers on land. Great are the terrors of the unknown; and such light as Alpine literature throws upon mountaineering is not calculated to allay apprehension among mothers and sisters of climbers. It must be confessed, however, that partly owing to the extra difficulties which usually attend pioneers, partly too, perhaps, from the minds of the writers having unconsciously been unduly impressed with dangers and difficulties for the first time encountered, there is an exaggeration about this literature scarcely paralleled elsewhere. Indeed, among the many excursions in the high Alps with which the writer is acquainted, he can only recall two which have not disappointed him by their ease as compared with the descriptions of them in Alpine Club or private publications. It is well to bear this in mind. And as from the increase in the number of mountaineers a corresponding increase in accidents must be expected, perhaps a discussion of some of the dangers and advantages of mountaineering may interest the general public to whom the pages of the 'Alpine Journal' are as a sealed book.

I may fairly be excused if, in so doing, I recount an accident which befel myself and a friend a year or two ago, and make this, together with the comments of the press upon it, the basis of operations; specially as these comments —so many at least as have met my own eye—appear to emanate mostly from writers more used to wield the pen than the axe. In some instances, indeed, they exhibit an entire ignorance of mountaineering, and after rushing forth to cudgel the unfortunate climber with advice, the

critics retire to Olympus with thunders against any who should doubt their competence.

The following letter is extracted from the 'Times' of August 27, 1867:—

AN ALPINE ESCAPE.

To the Editor of the 'Times.'

Sir . . . . . .

We left the Stein Alp yesterday at 1.30 A.M., meaning to come to this place by the Steinlimmi and the Trift Glacier Joch—two glacier passes—without guides.

On reaching the base of the Thältistock Rocks, which have to be mounted in order to avoid the upper ice-fall of the Trift Glacier, we found that our best route was to cross a long bridge of frozen snow and ice, connecting the glacier with the rocks. We had to cut steps along it, and while I was cutting the last, close to the rocks, the whole bridge suddenly gave way. I was instantaneously thrown backwards by the tilting up of the extremity of the bridge, and thrown headlong, more than 20ft. through the air, down into the chasm between the rocks and the glacier, bumping as I fell against falling masses of ice. When all was still I found myself unable to move, under blocks of *débris*, lying head downwards, while Mr. Trueman lay a little higher up in a similar position. After resting a little I was able to get to my knife and free myself from my havresack, the strap of which was cutting my chest. I next slipped off the rope which was coiled round me; but my coat was held firmly down under an immense block of

ice by the elbow and the right pocket. Had the block fallen an inch nearer, my right elbow must have been crushed, and we must have lain there and died.

Slowly, and by degrees, I slipped out of my coat and got on to my feet. I found that we were under the glacier, and but a narrow band of sky was visible. Mr. Trueman was lying in pain, his right knee and calf under a very heavy immovable block. Recovering my axe, I cut away sufficient ice to free his leg and allow him to slide down into my former position; but here his knapsack jammed him against the block of ice, and it was not until I had unfastened it that he could slide out and get on his legs, when we found that, beyond bruises and abrasions, we had sustained no serious injury, and had not lost anything, except a knife, guide-book, and a portion of my coat, which I had to cut off and leave in order to carry off the rest. Our first thoughts and words, after ascertaining that we were both alive, were to thank God for so narrow an escape.

If you would kindly publish this in your journal it might save our friends some anxiety, for the story has already gone to the Rhone Glacier, and come back under the form that we were on the Sidelhorn, and that one was killed, while the other had come coatless home. A gentleman who sat next me at breakfast this morning was relating this last story in the most serious tones to his neighbours. The guides, I believe, circulate these reports, it being to their interest to make the worst of the matter, which had really nothing to do with their absence; but

they are jealous of my constantly dispensing with their services and tariffs.

Yours truly,

A. G. GIRDLESTONE, Magdalen College, Oxford.

Grimsel, August 22.

In a leading article of the following day the 'Standard,' after mentioning *three* gentlemen as concerned, proceeds,—'They started on their expedition without guides, traversed a huge bridge of frozen snow and ice, tampered with it by trying to cut steps, broke through, were precipitated into a chasm, escaped a horrible fate by the merest chance conceivable, saw nothing worth seeing, did nothing worth remembering, were bruised and scarified considerably, and have enjoyed what is called an Alpine adventure. It is to this complexion that most of such narratives come. Of course it would be idle in the present temper of the vacation travelling mind to attempt reasoning upon the matter.'

I only pause to remark that to cut steps on a bridge, narrow in its upper surface, is not necessarily to tamper with it, and also that we that day saw much worth seeing, and did much worth remembering. The writer proceeds presently to deal with mountaineers in general.—'They must breathe on the Montanvert; they must defy the clouds from the Wengern Alp; they must walk eight hours to get a meal, and freeze all night for a shelter. They must risk an instant of giddiness, a false step, a falling rock, avalanches and abysses, and all the artillery which

those fortresses of nature can bring to bear upon them, or their holiday has been thrown away, and was not deserved.'

Here it is noticeable that the writer opines that the Montanvert, with its snug inn and its broad path to the luxury of Chamouny, and the Wengern Alp with its hotels and restaurants, are giddy heights which only tempt the unwary traveller into the probability of having to walk eight hours on an empty stomach, and then to be half-frozen all night; though no half-measures, indeed, are suggested. Then follow a few patronising remarks, after which a thunder-bolt is hurled at all who are rash enough to doubt that the dweller in the plain is skilled in adventuring 'critical suggestions.'—'But the supreme glorification with which it has been the fashion for some years to surround Alpine climbers, and the contempt with which, by Alpine clubs, all critical suggestions are treated, indicate a strange mixture of ignorance and vanity, as if the art of travel were never understood before champagne bottles were uncorked on the summit of Mont Blanc, and as if, when a man has stared from a white pinnacle upon a wilderness of other white pinnacles, he has eclipsed all other adventure, and left nothing to be seen from the Tropics to the Arctic Zone.'

Let us take another vigorous critic, the 'Pall Mall Gazette;' gathering into a bundle all the rods, before returning such answer as may be. In the number of that Journal for August 28 appeared a paragraph commenting upon the accident. We are first charged with being inexperienced. Now it happens that my companion, Mr.

Trueman, who was fifty-seven years old when we crossed the Trift, first went to Switzerland more than forty years ago, and has been there frequently since, chiefly in the higher regions; not to mention that we had already, that very season, together ascended the Piz Bernina—no easy mountain—and subsequently, without the aid of guides, made a new glacier pass, and crossed the Clariden Grat; while, to speak for myself personally, six long vacations spent in the Alps in active mountaineering cannot have left me a novice. I wish decidedly to clear my friend and myself of this charge, because I can conceive nothing more likely to be dangerous than the passage of a long glacier pass by a party wholly inexperienced.

We are next informed that we did not know the way. The answer is simple: we had neither of us crossed the pass before; but if our condemnation were therefore valid, the 'Gazette' itself, being untried, would never have seen the light. We trusted to guide-book and Ordnance map, and not in vain; for throughout that long day's walk we were not once, except on the rocks of the Grimsel, a hundred yards out of our way. The personalities which follow may be disregarded: to have been depicted in a frontispiece of a 'Penny Illustrated Paper' in knickerbockers, is enough, in the decorously trowsered mind, to swallow up all minor insults. (See the 'Penny Illustrated Paper' for September 7, 1867.)

Finally, the 'Pall Mall' reverts to the main allegation, that we had no guides. It is on this point that I wish presently mainly to dwell. This, too, the 'Lancet' sig-

nalled out for sharp attack; so did a kindly writer in the 'Times' of August 29th, who puts very fairly the objections which may at first sight arise to that mountaineering without guides in which I find the highest pleasure, and which I certainly would foster as much as lies in my power. With this letter I shall conclude the catalogue of comments:—

THE ALPINE ESCAPE.

To the Editor of the 'Times.'

'Sir,—While heartily congratulating the writer of the letter in the "Times" of the 27th inst. on his escape, I cannot agree with him in thinking that the absence of guides, with whose "services and tariffs he constantly dispenses," had nothing to do with the accident. Mountaineers may occasionally dispense with guides, but to do so they must be fully versed in the ordinary rules of their craft. Any guide worthy of the name would have told Mr. Girdlestone that on a glacier expedition two men are exposed to risks which do not exist for a larger party, and that if it is necessary to cross a doubtful bridge there should be rope sufficient to permit of one only being on it at a time. Under the circumstances, it is not very wonderful if the guides do not share in the belief that the accident was unavoidable, and if they exaggerate, or even chuckle over, the disaster of one who professes himself openly their foe. I have found a hearty dislike for tariffs no hindrance in availing myself of the services of guides. All the best men, as is well known, are engaged during

the season to English travellers on terms based on mutual agreement, and without reference to local tariffs.

'I trust this escape will deter adventurous spirits from enlisting hastily in the campaign against guides which your correspondent seems disposed to head. It is a strife which will claim many victims, for if the leader in it scarcely escapes with life, how will his followers fare?

'I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

'ONE WHO CLIMBS.

'London, August 28th.'

First, let us consider the very prevalent idea, reiterated by the 'Standard,' that mountaineering in general, and especially when carried to any high pitch, is an exercise exposing its followers to great risks which are in no degree repaid by any advantages gained. Compare, then, the objects and risks of the mountaineer with those of the foxhunter and the sportsman, with those of boating men, and—may I add?—with those of the frequenters of ball-rooms. The fair sex inveigh not a little against the rashness of mountaineers, but I ask them whether these are rasher than those who whirl round a heated room during the small hours of the night, in inflammable dresses, with occasional intervals for becoming 'deliciously cool' in a draught of air, and with a heavy supper to crown all? Does such a pursuit, engaged in night after night, conduce to health and strength of mind or body? Or rather, does it not silently, but surely, blight many a flower in the bud, and send many a victim to a premature grave? And

what is the object gained? Refreshment to a toil-worn brain? fresh, clear air to the dweller in towns? nature's unsullied face to purify and invigorate workers amid 'the din, the shock, the hum of men?'

And the boating man! To omit the well-known evils to health attending boat-racing, is death a rare guest in the pleasure boat? Let the accidents arising in the pursuit of boating be compared with Alpine mishaps; they will be found greatly to outnumber them; while the exercise is much less healthful, from affording—except to an occasional 'Water Lily' or 'Rob Roy'—no change of people and customs, of tongue and of scenery.

Much the same may be said of sporting, while its object—the pursuit and slaughter of animals—can scarcely be said in any great degree to humanise or ennoble. Who would not prefer the thunder of avalanches, whose effects care and experience may avoid, to the popping of the guns of novices in directions baffling a sage to predict? *Vide* Mr. Pickwick's feelings under such circumstances: 'Take away his gun, take away his gun, do you hear, somebody?' 'And bring a snow mountain,' that great man undoubtedly would have added, had he lived now.

These and other common sports of English gentlemen in England beyond question are accompanied to some extent with danger. What risks do the Alps present? Perhaps an extract from one of the best guidebooks to Switzerland—that edited by Mr. Ball—will supply the most complete answer:—

'The dangers of Alpine expeditions may be divided into two classes—the real and the imaginary. Where a ridge or slope of rock or ice is such that it could be traversed without difficulty if it lay but a few feet above the level of a garden, the substitution on either side of a precipice some thousands of feet in depth, or of a glacier crevasse, makes no real difference in the work to be done, though it may have a formidable effect on the traveller's imagination. Those who cannot remove this source of danger by accustoming themselves to look unmoved down vertical precipices, and, in cases of real difficulty, to fix their attention exclusively on the ledge or jutting crag to which they must cling with foot or hand, should avoid expeditions where a moment's nervousness may endanger their own lives or those of others.

'The real dangers of the high Alps may, under ordinary circumstances, be reduced to three. First, the yielding of the snow-bridges that cover glacier crevasses; second, the risk of slipping upon steep slopes of hard ice; third, the fall of ice or rocks from above. . . . .

'During bad weather the ordinary risks of Alpine travelling are much increased, and serious dangers from other causes may assail the traveller. Masses of rock are detached from their previously firm resting-places, and come thundering down across the track. Falling snow obscures the view and effaces the foot-prints, so that it becomes equally difficult to advance and to retreat. Most formidable of all, the *tourmente*, or snow whirlwind—when the wind begins to blow in violent gusts—bewilders the

traveller, half blinded by the fine dust-like snow of the higher regions, and benumbs his limbs with its biting breath if he be unable to keep up rapid exercise.'

Of the three real dangers, the first is *entirely* averted by a proper use of the rope. The second and third require experience and care in the mountaineer. Until he has acquired experience in some degree, a man should on no account mountaineer without an experienced companion. But the very fact that care and presence of mind are requisites in mountaineering constitutes, most will agree, no small part of its excellence. There can scarcely be a more bracing nerve-tonic than the critical situations on difficult expeditions, which compel coolness and vigour.

A true mountaineer takes a peculiar delight in the processes of his craft, which is quite independent of ulterior objects, such as scenery or health. He was a spurious imitation who, after we had surmounted a difficult peak, afterwards owned that his sole object was to have 'done' it, and would believe neither in his own nor in my love for the art. Yet far beyond the mere pleasure in climbing is the ennobling and purifying effect of wandering amid the grandest scenery, far from man's abodes, practically alone, with thirty or forty feet of rope separating one from one's comrade, able

'To hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unrolled.'

The feelings so gained it is impossible to communicate to one who has never experienced them, and they are pro-

duced in many to a far higher degree by the eternal snows and the weird forms of the Alps, than by any other kind of scenery. This fact it is which really elevates mountaineering above other kinds of active recreation, and as will probably be confessed by all, kindles an unusual enthusiasm in its votaries. Who that has witnessed it will not acknowledge the animation of a conversation about the Alps? What outsider has not peculiarly felt that he is an 'extern' when mountaineers meet? The enthusiasm may perhaps thus create selfishness, but it is none the less a proof that the Alps are loved by those who know them.

But to revert to the risks of mountaineering, and to the comments of the 'Standard,' which may, perhaps, represent the popular idea of them. First comes risk of starvation—the walk of 'eight hours to get a meal.' Such a remark is, however, hardly worth answering, the remedy of carrying enough provisions to cover any risk of passing the night out is obvious enough. Perhaps the most practical answer that I can return is that in the season of 1867—the year of the accident referred to—in the case of twelve glacier excursions of considerable magnitude, although I carried my own provisions, and therefore took as little as possible, I invariably found some of my store unconsumed at the journey's end. Assuredly starvation is not the ordinary accompaniment of mountaineering; the press more often criticises the constant description of feasts than of fasts in Alpine literature.

To be compelled to pass the night without shelter is of rare occurrence. Every year doubtless this fate befalls

some luckless adventurer. So far as my own experience goes, I have never, when with guides, been so belated as to fail in reaching shelter, and only once in the course of more than seventy glacier expeditions without guides. It is common enough to sleep in caves, or under stones, and occasionally even to bivouac on rocks of set purpose, so as to shorten a day's work; but well does a mountaineer understand how to make merry under such circumstances by vast brews of chocolate and mulled wine, by songs and the like, eking out thereafter Nature's scanty coverlets with good Swiss blankets.

Let him who is giddy not essay difficult expeditions, until fortified, at least, and cured by familiarity with more easy work. 'Instants of giddiness' do not waylay the practised climber; their existence is only in the critic's brain. The other risks adverted to in the leading article of the 'Standard' have already been considered, saving the 'ignorance and vanity' inbred, as the writer thinks, by Alpine climbing.

I turn now to the writer in the 'Times,' whose remarks are worthy of much more serious notice; and in order to answer them effectually, commence with a much fuller account of the accident than I had space for in my original letter.*

I have already attempted to clear myself of the charge of rashness in proposing to an experienced climber, such as Mr. Trueman, to cross the Trift Glacier Joch without guides. I had surveyed the pass from several points of

* See, too, the account of the accident in its proper place later on, Chapter VI.

view two years before, having then purposed to cross it without guides, but was prevented by the weather. 'The Alpine Guide' gives very good directions for finding the way over *this* pass—*O si sic omnia*!—, we had the Ordnance map, a compass, plenty of good rope, and a tried axe. My companion I knew from personal experience to be sure-footed, free from giddiness, and enduring. Our main difficulty arose from the great length of the two passes together, which have to be traversed to reach the Grimsel Hospice from the Stein Alp. But an early start with a brilliant moon which was then favouring us counteracted it. Having crossed the first pass—the Steinlimmi—we arrived on the scene of the accident at about 8 A.M. We stood on the glacier, which at this point had, through the warmth of the previous fortnight, shrunk to a considerable extent from the rocks at its side which we had to surmount. Here and there was a jutting isthmus of ice, forming part of a series of natural bridges over the chasm below. We chose one of these to cross, after a survey of it. The glacier at this height was not snow-covered, so we had not been employing the rope; and the bridge, though at its near end a mere knife-edge above, widened out beyond, and was throughout its length apparently of a tolerable thickness, so that I did not propose to attach ourselves. Mr. Trueman, however, wished to put on the rope at the bridge, not with any idea that the latter might break, but solely to use it as a mental crutch in crossing so ugly a chasm, from the feeling of security it gives in case of a slip. But on my objecting, as we should have had to take it off again

immediately, in order more conveniently to climb the rocks, he agreed that it was better to do without it. However, it was necessary to cut steps, not so as to hew the bridge in two, which some critics seemed to think was the case, but to remove the upper edge in places, so as to afford standing room to the feet, and it was not until I was cutting the final step on ice supported by rock, that the bridge gave way at a point behind me, where Mr. Trueman was quietly standing. No doubt the vibrations from the blows of the axe assisted the casualty, but it must have been caused mainly by some flaw in the lower part of the bridge which we had not detected.

Now, how could this accident have been avoided? I believe undoubtedly that if we had not both been on the bridge at once it would not have broken, and, therefore, must own that this is another warning not to let laziness forbid the use of the rope, when it may possibly be of use. Had we walked over separately without a rope every purpose would have been answered; but my companion was shortsighted; and when I found walking across difficult for myself, I thought it better to extend to him my axe when I had reached the centre of the bridge, and help him so far. I believe, however, that had an average guide been with us, no other course would have been adopted. Indeed, so reckless are men of this class that, constantly on snow-covered crevasses, they either dispense with the use of the rope altogether or employ such poor cord as would be of no use in case of need; though this last charge cannot be brought against the first-class guides,

who usually now have English club rope. There is no doubt that, in some respects, two men are at a disadvantage compared with three on the ice, where a slip or fall may occur. But in one important respect—that of speed—two have decidedly the advantage; and this tells in many ways, for, by getting over ground early in the day there is less risk of avalanches, which are not prevalent till the sun has softened the snow, less risk of falling into bergschrunds and crevasses for a similar reason, and less risk of being belated. For my own part, I greatly doubt the received axiom, that three are better than two mountaineers. I may add, that some of the best guides coincide in this opinion.

It is a question for each individual how far he may venture to dispense with guides. There are occasions when arduous step-cutting in hard ice has to be undertaken during long periods. For such work, as well as for sureness of foot and ease in awkward places, a guide, even a second or third rate one, used to the mountains, and often engaged all the year round in muscular labour, has an immense advantage over any amateur, however skilful. But their inferior education occasionally puts them to a disadvantage. Many of them cannot understand a map, so that in fog or storm, and in unknown country, an experienced mountaineer frequently has to direct the course.* Nevertheless, for my own part, I should not have commenced a campaign against guides, had it not been for their domineering disposition and their exorbitant tariffs.

* See *A Walk round the Wetterhorn*, ch. v., and the *Col d'Herens*, ch. vii.

The guides are naturally tempted to order travellers about, from the responsibility for their safety which they incur. Beyond question, in serious difficulties, whether arising from weather or the nature of the ground, all deference should be paid to the directions of a responsible leader. But too generally guides, not content with this, settle upon certain fixed habitual places for resting and for feeding, and insist, however loath the traveller may be, upon a halt at such points. Sometimes this arises merely from their liking to cling to their formed habits. Often, however, it is merely because glacier excursions make the feast days of the guides, and the provisions of the luckless traveller having been plentifully ordered, are to be fully and constantly enjoyed. To resist their attempts to halt and feed, even at intervals of two hours, if so minded, is apt to produce sulkiness, and consequent probable failure in an expedition, or may be wholly unavailing. When ascending the Schreckhorn with a first-rate amateur, Mr. W. E. Utterson Kelso, we ventured to suggest to our two guides, who were sitting down and opening the knapsacks, that it was rather premature to recommence after only an hour and a half had elapsed since our previous meal. 'Then I shall return,' said one of them, sulkily. So of course we gave way. In 1868, in an ascent of the Matterhorn with the same gentleman and Mr. Grove, we all three were struck with the frequency with which the guides halted to feed on the short walk from Zermatt to the hut, and in no one case on that expedition did they ask our leave before halting to unpack the provisions. As we were very

anxious to keep the guides in good humour, we said nothing—I doubt whether we thought the less: and I believe that I shall be borne out by most mountaineers in saying that the necessity of keeping one's guides in good humour involves a very unpleasant amount of subjection to them.

My critic, in the 'Times,' who dislikes the tariffs as much as I do, suggests evading them by engaging a guide for a considerable period. This may be done, certainly. But it is like prescribing port to a pauper. There are a number of travellers who can by no means afford the luxury of carrying a guide about with them; for the ordinary charge of one is from six to ten francs a day, and twenty francs for glacier days: often it is much higher. Such tourists must either make only two or three high expeditions with guides, or supplement these by sundry illicit excursions without them.

Many an Alpine tourist has but moderate means; but *by exercising due caution, by gradual progression in the difficulty of expeditions attempted, by always overcoming with guides greater obstacles than are combatted alone, and thus continually learning,* much may be done without guides.

We are warned, over and over again, of the risks attending such enterprises. My own conviction, borne out by experience, is, that they who could not afford to take guides often indeed incur risks by making expeditions without their aid, yet more than counterbalance them by the chance so gained of increased health and long life, and

become more independent and better mountaineers than if they were constantly guided; not to mention the peculiar pleasure in escaping from the routine ways and despotic orders of these lords of the glaciers.

The adventures without guides related in the accompanying pages are necessarily selected as the most exciting and interesting which I have met with. The dangers encountered in them might be held prejudicial to my argument, but success under such difficulties may encourage further efforts, while far more numerous successes without any difficulties at all, which are not here recounted, rebut accusations of rashness, though they would be uninteresting to relate in consequence.

That the general public should view high mountaineering without guides as akin to madness is not surprising; but that practised mountaineers should share the opinion can only be accounted for by the inertia of the human mind when once habituated to the contemplation of a train of guides and porters as incidental to peaks and passes. It is startling to read, in a book which has obtained a wide circulation, such expressions as follow about excursions, both of which have, as my narrative relates, been accomplished without guides at all, and in the company of almost wholly inexperienced men.

Col d'Herens.—'The formidable difficulties of the Col.' 'Probably one of the most difficult in the Alps.' 'A difficult if not a dangerous pass, and should by no means be attempted without guides and ropes. A Scotch gentleman

made the passage by himself in 1853 from Zermatt; but the exploit was a mad one, and is mentioned by way of warning rather than of example.'

The Wetterhorn.—The same writer, in ascending this peak, having for his own satisfaction engaged three guides, was induced by their leader to take a fourth. 'I was somewhat annoyed at having this additional expense put upon me, but did not like to oppose the wishes of the leading guide in such a matter, and assented.' In another part of his book he adds to the argument against guides contained in the last extract by the following admission as to the *Tschingel*:—'I think it might safely be crossed without a guide by two or three persons, one of whom was well acquainted with the structure of glaciers.'

To return to the *Wetterhorn*. I quite agree with the same author's remark that 'no one ought to undertake such an enterprise who was not tolerably familiar with Alpine climbing.' My own story illustrates this truth too well, while obviously it contradicts the following assertion:—'Three guides are absolutely necessary for the expedition.' As the writer truly adds, 'All these men have to be fed for the greatest part of two days, and the bill for eatables is not a small one.'

I have made the above extracts from a work deservedly much read by tourists, Mr. Wills's 'Wanderings among the High Alps.' That they express the sentiments of so very excellent a mountaineer indicates the need of information as to what can really be effected in the Alps. It is, however, only fair to add that our present greatly increased

knowledge of the Alps renders mountaineering much more easy than it was formerly.

The 'Alpine guide,' however, often makes use of similar language. To make quotations only with reference to peaks or passes referred to in the following pages is sufficient:—

Col du Mont Tondu (Trelatête).—'A guide is necessary for this pass.'

Weissthor.—'The services of a thoroughly experienced guide are essential.'

Adler and Alphubel.—'Not to be attempted except by men in thorough training, with good guides, and in settled weather.'

Lötschen Pass.—'Should not be undertaken without a guide.'

Strahleck.—'It is scarcely necessary to say that at least one thoroughly reliable guide should be taken.'

Sella.—'Only for practised mountaineers with good guides.'

Such phrases as the above, and, much more, the general impression conveyed in most accounts of mountaineering, abundantly justify the publication of this volume.

Some remarks on the subject of this chapter by Professor Tyndall have appeared in the March number of 'Macmillan's Magazine' for 1869.

The cautions which the Professor gives are admirable; but, while anxious to avoid all responsibility for encouraging the practice, he cannot refrain from letting his real feelings of approbation be known.

I quote the following extract from his paper:—'He,' Mr. Girdlestone, 'deems guides, and rightly so, very expensive, and he also feels pleasure in trying his own powers. I would admonish him that he may go too far in this direction, and probably his own experience has by this time forestalled the admonition. Still there is much in his feeling which challenges sympathy; for if skill, courage, and strength are things to be cultivated in the Alps, they are, within certain limits, best exercised and developed in the absence of guides. And if the real climbers are ever to be differentiated from the crowd, it is only to be done by dispensing with professional assistance. But no man without natural aptitude and due training would be justified in undertaking anything of this kind, and it is an error to suppose that the necessary knowledge can be obtained in one or two summers in the Alps. Climbing is an art, and those who wish to cultivate it on their own account ought to give themselves sufficient previous practice in the company of first-rate guides. This would not shut out expeditions of minor danger now and then without guides. But whatever be the amount of preparation, real climbers must still remain select men. Here, as in every other sphere of human action, whether intellectual or physical, as indeed among the guides themselves, real eminence falls only to the lot of few.'

To illustrate the argument further, I add, in conclusion, the two following extracts culled from the same article:—

'On that occasion I was accompanied by two Swiss guides and two Italian porters. Three of these four men

pronounced flatly against the final precipice. Indeed they had to be urged by degrees along the sharp and jagged ridge.'

'In July 1865 my excellent friend Hirst and myself visited Glarus, intending, if circumstances favoured us, to climb the Tödi. We had, however, some difficulty with the guides, and therefore gave the expedition up.'

CHAPTER II.

[1865.]

THE STRAHLECK (WITH GUIDES).—THE WEISSTHOR.

There glorious temples shine,
Thick frosted o'er with gems,
Unknown to earthly mine,
Or earthly diadems.—*H. M. Parker.*

THE STRAHLECK.

ALTHOUGH the special object of this volume is to give an account of the pleasures, risks, and methods, of mountaineering in the High Alps, without guides, the following account of an expedition, with guides, is prefixed, with the view of illustrating these by contrast; and also because our success on this occasion, and the manifest inadequacy, in some respects, of the guides—though they were men of repute—mainly gave rise to my original attempt without guides. And as the Strahleck was my first considerable glacier pass, I entered in my journal, and have preserved here, full particulars which may serve as an explanatory introduction to such readers as are not familiar with Alpine literature.

On Saturday, July 23, I arrived in Grindelwald, and arranged to try the pass with Head, an acquaintance whom

I had just picked up. We immediately held a conference with our landlord as to guides. We wished only to take one, for they charge thirty francs each for the pass, but we could not get one to go with us alone. At length two volunteered to go with us for the price of one, and accordingly we arranged to start on Monday, and gave orders about our food. But in the evening we found that the guides thinking us in their power, had agreed after all to make no reduction in their charge.

Head was eager to try the pass without guides, but as we had neither axe nor rope, this would have been madness. So we agreed to give up the expedition, whereupon the two guides offered to take us over the Strahleck, and next day over another pass—the Ewig Schneehorn—at the ordinary price of the Strahleck alone. To this arrangement we acceded. During the whole of Saturday night and Sunday morning snow and sleet fell, but the weather cleared up a little in the afternoon, and we arranged to start early on Monday. Our landlord told us that Herr Beck, a Swiss gentleman (I conceal his real name) a member of their Alpine Club, wished to cross too, and would be glad if we would allow him to accompany us; so we had an interview, and gladly consented to let him join us with his guide, as he was confident of his powers and deeply impressed with his own importance as a member of the Swiss A.C.

At 2, then, on Monday morning we started. The moon shone brilliantly. Our guides were heavily laden, for we required provisions for two days, as we meant to spend the

night between our two passes, not at the Grimsel hotel, but at an empty hut above the ice nearer to Grindelwald.

Our provisions consisted of seven loaves, butter, honey, a leg of mutton, ham, cheese, two dozen eggs, prunes (which are most useful to moisten the mouth while climbing), coffee, chocolate, five bottles of wine, two of cold tea, and half a bottle of brandy. All this did not prove too much for four of us. Guides generally insist on taking much more brandy than might be necessary in case of emergencies; and it was only with difficulty that we reduced our stock to the reasonable amount of half a bottle. Honey, which is not usually taken, cannot be too strongly recommended; it enables one to eat when the food has become dry, and when the wine is running short.

Herr Beck must very soon have repented of the important manner with which he had informed us that he was a climber. For we ran him off his legs before reaching the glacier, and he engaged as a second guide the shepherd who lives in the hut where travellers obtain refreshments at the Eismeer of Grindelwald.

After crossing the Eismeer we soon had a steep climb up some rocks. Poor Herr Beck fell into sore troubles at one point where we were obliged to turn a corner on the face of the rocks, holding on with hands and feet to whatever roughness there was. At length, by dint of one guide pulling and another pushing, he was got across. We then lost sight of him for some time, and after crossing a snow patch and some more rocks, we halted for breakfast on the upper level of the glacier.

The place was glorious. We were seated on a few rocks which lay on the glacier. This, to the left, descended in an ice-fall with its grotesque pinnacles, while to the right it was covered with snow, and stretched away to the base of the Finsteraarhorn—a massive pyramid of black rock streaked with snow. In front was another ice-fall, still steeper, up the rocks at the side of which we were to climb. Above it towered the crags of the Schreckhorn. Nothing but snow, ice, and rock was included in this extensive view, which was wonderfully wild.

After breakfast we all roped together, and having moistened our faces with glycerine to save the skin from cracking, we put on our veils and spectacles, and crossing the glacier, climbed for one or two hours to the summit of the pass, which we reached at 10 A.M. Herr Beck came up about an hour afterwards, when he dismissed his second guide and joined our rope.

Now came the only difficulty of the pass—the descent of about 800 feet of a steep snow wall. Having roped ourselves together in one party, we started, but found that little avalanches were detached at every step; the snow was in very bad condition, and not conglomerated at all, owing to the previous bad weather, so we went down backwards, with our faces to the snow, as down a ladder. It was soon apparent that if we went on here we should all go down in an avalanche, so we climbed up again and tried another place. Poor Herr Beck! he was becoming very uncomfortable.

We went once more down backwards, and when we had

effected three-quarters of the total descent, I proposed that we should turn round and glissade down the remainder of the wall, in a sitting posture.

To render intelligible what follows, it must be premised that we were tied together, at intervals of two or three yards, along a rope, so that where the leader went, the rest must follow. First was a guide, then myself, a second guide, Head, Herr Beck, and, last of all, his guide. At the bottom of the ice-wall is a bergschrund, or chasm, which we expected to find bridged over with snow, but, owing to the steepness of the slope, we could not tell about this for certain. We set off glissading, amid the protests of the Herr, who was compelled, by the rope, to accompany us. Our motion soon became very rapid; and suddenly the front guide shouted to me in German: 'The schrund is open! throw up your legs,' and suiting the action to the words—for he had reached the edge of the chasm—he threw up his own. In a moment I, too, reached the brink, and throwing up my feet, shot through the air, and so alighted safely on the other side and continued the slide. The guide behind me did likewise, but Head, who did not understand German, let his legs drop, and was caught against the opposite side as he was carried on. We were pulled up with a sudden jerk, while he was compressed and squeezed against the side of the chasm. But even if he had understood the guide's words, his chance of a safe transit would have been very small, for poor Herr Beck had long since lost his presence of mind, and allowed his alpenstock to slip away; and being thus deprived of all power

of control, slid down upon Head and entangled his legs round the latter's neck. So they slid on, the Herr falling upon Head and crushing him still more, while on the top of all fell the guide. There they were, a living heap, struggling to cling to the side of the schrund, lest sliding back into it they should dangle on the rope, or break their necks.

'Halt,' cried the Herr;—a superfluous remark under the circumstances, for the schrund had settled that matter. As soon as possible we came to their relief, and they scrambled and were pulled out. The Herr was nearly frantic; he soon, however, recovered his good humour, and laughed as heartily as any one.

We now descended the Unteraar glacier, wading through slush and snow and tumbling into crevasses, and, at last, in a violent hail and thunderstorm, reached the Pavilion, as the hut is called, where we were to sleep. Here we parted with our kindly and merry Swiss friend and his guide, who went on to the comparative luxury of the Grimsel, where we rejoined them next day; for it continued to rain and hail through the night, and after an ineffectual attempt next morning on the Schneehorn Pass, we were beaten back by our guides and a snowstorm, and hurried down, wet cold and hungry, to obtain dry clothes and dinner.

An account of a passage of the Strahleck, effected without guides in 1867, appears in its proper place later on, Chapter VII. While we occupied on this occasion, with guides, fourteen hours between Grindelwald and the Pavi-

lion, Mr. Trueman and I, on our subsequent passage without guides, employed only eleven and a half hours in traversing the same distance in the reverse direction—a gain in speed which cannot be accounted for solely by the relative heights of the Pavilion and Grindelwald. We found, indeed, that our guides, independently of their slippery bargaining, went much more slowly than we could have done, and on the second day they quite lost their heads.

After this expedition I had an axe made for me at Reichenbach, and after trying it on the Titlis, and crossing with a friend (I believe as the first Englishmen) the Silvretta glacier pass without professional aid, we resolved to attempt the Weissthor.

*** Each guide for the Strahleck 30 francs. Two at least, as a rule, to be taken.

THE WEISSTHOR.

The grey and ancient peaks,
Round which the silent clouds hung day and night;
And the low voice of water as it makes,
Like a glad creature, murmuring of delights;
These are your joys! Go forth.—*Mary Howitt.*

TOWARDS the end of the summer, Mr. Pilcher, of Oriel College, and I descended into Italy for a little luxury during the vintage, after a few weeks' mountaineering and reading in Switzerland. Each wished then to wander according to his own ideas for a week or ten days, but we agreed to meet once more at Bellagio, and proceed direct to Macugnaga, a little Italian village lying immediately

at the foot of the dark, overhanging crags and precipices of the Weissthor.

There are at least three passes which go by this title, of which one, wholly unworthy of the name, does not connect Italy with Switzerland, but leads from the summit of the Monte Moro to the summit of the Weissthor proper. The New Weissthor as the route we wished to take is called, to distinguish it from one now unused, leads in a day from Macugnaga to Zermatt and the neighbouring Riffel Hotel. The difficulties on it, as we had learned from a sight of Murray, lay solely on the Italian side, which we were to ascend, and consisted of steep rock climbing, and a sharp, frozen arête, or ridge, near the summit.

We unfortunately possessed only Bädeker's guide-book, which, though admirable for lower excursions, at that time gave no details of the high glacier passes, and we had no tolerable map. But we arranged to reach Macugnaga by the middle of the day, so that we might have time to reconnoitre, and make enquiries as to the way.

On Wednesday afternoon, then, we wandered out in the direction of the morrow's journey, to familiarise ourselves with the turns we should have to take in the darkness of early morning. On returning to our little inn, the 'Monte Moro,' we endeavoured to find out from the landlord at what point we ought to cross the ridge of rock and ice high above our heads. We had hoped not to divulge our object of profanely attempting to cross this formidable barrier without guides—the very genii of the place; but our particular enquiries aroused our landlord's suspicions, and after a sharp cross examination of us, he sullenly referred us to

his servant, who usually acted as guide, telling him our object.

This man, a dark, sturdy fellow, brought a telescope and pointed out a spot where, he said, we must reach the summit of the precipices, particularly directing us to keep to our left hand a glacier which descends from the Weissthor and Cima di Rofel towards the Belvedere. But the opinions of the group which soon formed round us as we stood outside the door, differed considerably on every point, and we went to bed in great uncertainty as to our route for the next day; but resolved to make an attempt, incited the more to do so by the sullen opposition of our host and all the guides of the place.

On ordering our provisions for the journey, fresh difficulties were started. We were told at first that we could not have any meat,—eventually we obtained between us half a duck, a few eggs, and some bread; to which Pilcher added half a bottle of wine and I another of cold tea. We had sent most of our things over the Simplon to ease our backs, as Italian luxury was but a poor preparation for the trial of strength we proposed to ourselves. So in the morning, with light knapsacks, we started off at 4 o'clock, in the dark, for it was the 1st of September.

In half-an-hour we overtook and passed a party from Lochmatter's hotel, with their excellent host as guide. But wishing to avoid all risk of appearing to benefit by their track, we hurried on, although they began to enter into conversation. At the last châlet we got some milk. Here all track ceased; and now, following the advice of the

previous night, we worked up to the glacier, and kept it on our left. But we gradually grew more and more convinced, from the look of things, that we ought to be on the other side of it; so at last we began to cross it, and to our delight—since it was almost for the first time—we were obliged to use the ice-axe. But our work soon became more than a joke. We attached ourselves with the rope, and relieving one another in the use of the axe, cut steps up and down the difficulties of a moderate ice-fall—very hard work to novices as we were. Every now and then it was needful to walk along a narrow edge of ice, between the yawning chasms; then followed a downward spring to some ledge in one, from which we emerged, cutting steps up the other side. It was hard work! Often we thought of turning back, but as often were urged on again by the ill-natured joy we should have created at Macugnaga.

The party we had passed now came into sight, on the rocks to our left, high above us. They descried us, and made signs that it was hopeless to attempt to proceed. But the day was grand and our spirit up, and on we worked. For five weary hours! At last we reached the opposite side of the glacier, a good deal higher up than the point at which we had attacked it first. But, as is often the case, we found that the summer's heat had caused the ice to shrink away from the rocks, leaving a smooth wall of ice for us to descend, and another of rock on the opposite side of the chasm to ascend, if we could. This had no doubt caused the party above to advise us to retreat. However, after hunting about, we managed to

lower ourselves, at a moderately easy spot, on to the débris of rock which formed the floor of the chasm.

Exhausted as we were by our five hours' work, Pilcher proposed to sit down here and lunch off our scanty store.

'No, this is an avalanche track, I can see now a stone falling,' I replied.

'Well, you can do as you like, I mean to sit and eat,' replied Pilcher, whose first season this was in the mountains, and who had consequently a supreme contempt for such visionary trifles as danger from avalanche.

'Well then, I may as well enjoy myself too; but let us unrope, at least, so as to be able to run if necessary;' and untying ourselves we sat down, opened our knapsacks, and spread out our food.

I had just unclasped my knife, when a roar as of artillery was heard above our heads: for a moment I was paralysed, but the avalanche rolled on, and I sprang up, shouting out, 'run for your life,' and ran down the gully over blocks of stone, in hopes of finding lower down some shelter in the rock, the smooth face of which, where we sat, pitilessly forbade retreat.

Pilcher soon ensconced himself behind a projection of ice, a shelter too insecure, from its brittleness, for my choice. Thence he watched the massive blocks of rock gaining on me, bounding high in the air, and splitting in fragments on the débris below, as they thundered over our resting-place. On seeing one block, six or seven feet in diameter, coming very near to me, he shouted out, and I sprang, just in time, behind a projecting buttress, which at

last I had reached. The mass fell within a yard of it and bounded along. At last the avalanche was spent, and we once more ventured out from our nooks and breathed in safety.

We hastily scaled the rocks out of the gully, and soon reached the faintly-marked track of our predecessors.

Our escape had been narrow enough to shake our nerves, and make us glad to sit and take some food. It was now past mid-day, and the peaks of Monte Rosa, which had glittered all the morning in a pure blue sky, were overclouded. A change in the weather seemed imminent, and we resolved to push on without delay.

We were often obliged to climb with hands and feet, and sometimes to go on all-fours, holding merely by pressure of the palm of the hand against the smooth sloping rock. The clouds soon covered us with mist, and we could not see many yards before us, except occasionally when they lifted for a few moments. We kept climbing near the glacier, until at length we saw the tracks of our predecessors on the snow, which at this height covered it. These we followed, and they led on to an arête, in places rather uncomfortably narrow to us, and twice broken across by deep chasms. These were bridged over by an unpleasantly thin crust of frozen snow, through apertures in which we could see into the great blue 'schrunds,' in which innumerable and gigantic icicles depended from the roof. A more beautiful sight cannot well be conceived, but one quite striking enough to warn us to use the greatest care in crossing over. I fastened my axe firmly in the snow below, while

Pilcher quietly walked over, I paying out the rope which bound us together, and which would have been his support had the covering given way. Then he anchored in like manner above the upper edge, and looked after me while I too crossed the thin roof. We soon got on to steeper rocks above the ice, and at about 4.30 P.M. we arrived in thick fog at a place where scattered egg-shells and bottles shewed us that travellers halted for meals. We concluded, therefore, that we could not be far from the snow-fields on the other side of the pass. But not a trace of foot-marks could we see beyond, and long and anxious was the hour which we now spent, trying different directions in which to cross the ridge.

At length Pilcher shouted that he saw footmarks on some snow, and called me to look at them too. In a moment we saw that they were on a downward slope to the north. We were on the summit! It is quite impossible to describe our relief. But sleet had been for some time falling, and it was bitterly cold and growing dark, and now it began to snow hard; so, buttoning up our overcoats and putting on our gloves, we adjusted the rope firmly, and set off running and walking along the snow slopes of the Cima di Jazi. Gradually the weather cleared up a little, and the fog was dissipated, or the almost entire obliteration of the track of our predecessors by the fresh snow might have seriously inconvenienced us.

We strode along as quickly as possible, but before we quitted the ice it was too dark to see, and there was no moon. With difficulty we found the little path to the

Riffel—a solitary inn on the mountain side. At first this was a mere track among débris, along which we were continually stumbling. After a while it became better, till on some rock we lost it. Now we hallooed and jodelled, as the Swiss term their wild shouting, hoping to obtain some hospitable response, and so find out the direction of our destination. But there was no answer. At length, as we wandered about we saw a light, which proved to be that of the hotel, where I, wearied out, but with a still vigorous comrade, was glad enough to rest the sole of my foot. It was half-past 10 at night.

So happily ended our first attempt to cross a considerable glacier pass without guides. Had we possessed the Ordnance map and Mr. Ball's guide, we should probably have been spared all our difficulties. That we succeeded notwithstanding, and in spite of the false information which, as Lochmatter afterwards told us, it was well known in Macugnaga had been wilfully given us by our host,—this, I think, shows clearly that a couple of mountaineers, properly prepared, may safely venture over such a pass alone. A compass, a rope, an axe, are indispensable for the Weissthor. A good map and guide-book are almost so.

I may add here, that difficulties from lack of food, though so easy to obviate, are much more common than from an overweight of it. My fatigue on this occasion was principally due to hunger, while so hard worked. Our landlord, as has been mentioned, was either unwilling or unable to supply us with sufficient food. I must here,

too, give all praise to Lochmatter, the landlord of the Monte Rosa hotel at Macugnaga, and a capital guide, who wished to stop us and give us directions in the morning when we passed him, though we had been staying at his rival's hotel, and were deeply offending his guide-prejudices.

*** Fixed charge for each guide 25 francs, two of whom are often required.

CHAPTER III.

[1865.]

THE BUET—THE BRUNNI GLACIER—THE SELLA.

The sky was a dome of the crystal bright,
The fountain of vision and fountain of light;
The emerald fields were of dazzling glow,
And the flowers of everlasting blow.—*Ettrick Shepherd.*

THE BUET.

IN 1865 I was asked to take a pupil with me among the mountains, and with him I made the three following excursions.

Hargreave—my pupil—was seventeen years old, fairly strong and very spirited; we met at Lausanne, where his father, a most kind and hospitable friend of mine, lived; and to put ourselves into thorough training we resolved to make as our first day's excursion an ascent of the Buet, an easy snow mountain lying between the Lakes of Geneva and the Mont Blanc range, which commanded, as we were told, a magnificent view of the latter.

An old travelling companion of mine agreed to accompany us for a few days,—Roger by name, or rather by nickname, but so he has always been called among his

more intimate friends, and so he may pass here. He had just taken his degree at Cambridge, and was a strong fellow, having been captain of his college eight; but, like myself, he was out of health, and wanted a holiday.

I had left at Hargreave's house for the winter the rope which had proved so useful on the Weissthor, and once more regaining this old friend we set off by train, on June 27, for Vernayaz, the station before Martigny. We reached this place about midday, and then walked in four or five hours to the Barberine Hotel on the Tête Noir, where we dined and slept, meaning next day to attack the Buet and descending on the other side of it to walk over the Brevent to Chamouny; to which village we sent on our knapsacks, as we did not mean to carry any provisions, for, from the account in the guide-book, plenty of food would be obtainable at châlets on our way. We therefore contented ourselves with taking our brandy flasks, which we always carried in case of accident.

We started at 5 o'clock on a beautiful morning, and soon quitting the main path wandered up a lateral valley towards our mountain. We were exhilarated by a feeling of keen enjoyment of the Alps after our recent toils in England, and freedom from guides gave additional zest to the expedition; so we walked along at a capital pace, meaning to make a hearty luncheon on the bread and cream of the Châlet de Berard, an isolated little mountain restaurant at the head of the valley. It was with no little pleasure that we reached it, and with appetites sharpened by our unusual exercise, tapped at the door.

Judge of our feelings when we obtained no response, no welcome, no food! Not a soul was there for it was early in the season, and the cows had not yet been brought up to the higher pastures. We sat down, famished and disappointed, to rest and consider matters. But with hope and inexperience for guides, we were not disheartened, and after quenching our thirst at a spring we resolved to continue our attempt, and accordingly pushed on up the grassy hill which became steep soon. Before long we arrived at snow.

We had started too late in the morning, and a broiling sun was beginning to tell upon us and to soften the snow, so that we sank in it up to our knees at every step. At last we had to confess ourselves wearied out, and lay down to rest on a few rocks projecting above the snow. A pipe was some relief, but the sun was overpowering and we could not lie under its blaze long; Roger was becoming faint even, so we filled our hats with snow to cool our heads, and Hargreave, who was by far the most fresh of the party, led the way through the snow upward to a ridge a few hundred feet below the highest point. Here we again halted and resolved to give up the summit, although it looked invitingly near; but total lack of food constrained us.

We had some time before gained a magnificent view over the Mont Blanc range and the Bernese Oberland, and we now lay in some shade for an hour or two, and enjoyed the scenery. We wanted to descend on the other side the ridge which we had gained, to the Châlets de Villy, which we could see below, but on first arriving the

descent appeared to be too steep; after our rest, however, it looked easier, so we roped together and descended by a couloir, cautiously enough, for we were much exhausted; and after traversing slopes of débris and grass we reached the châlêts.

Not a soul, and still worse, not a cow was there; but we refreshed ourselves by a wash at the spring, and then searched through the châlets to see if anything in the shape of food was to be found, and at last we came upon a hut where it was evident that somebody was staying, who at the moment was out, and on penetrating into an inner room I found a loaf of black bread, of which we all ate, and a jug of curdled goat's cream. This last neither of the others could touch, so I half emptied it, and when we had satisfied our appetites we left some money on the table and departed, hoping to find more comfortable châlets lower down.

There was a valley between us and the steep ridge of the Brevent, which latter cut us off from Chamouny; we were too tired, however, to adhere to our original plan, and kept instead straight down the valley, making for the châlets of Moede, which were, I knew from the map, somewhere in the neighbourhood. Up and down we went with only here and there a track; sunset was approaching, and Mont Blanc looked down on us in all his grandeur. We were very tired before we came in sight of the châlets in the distance, wherein through my glasses I could descry people; but at this we cheered up and proceeded. On reaching our destination, we found that the cows had not come up from the valleys, and there was no milk to be had; but we, none

of us, had any idea of moving on, for fatigue left no alternative but to stay. Cider, black bread, and some simple soup, formed our whole supper.

Poor Roger, who was quite overdone, could fancy nothing, and retired to his straw, where in hat great coat and boots, he kept off 'as much of the nastiness as possible.' Hargreave and I, however, made up for his abstinence, and then amused ourselves with watching the operations of the shepherds. After we had finished, they cooled the cauldron of soup by pouring in water, and having washed our basins and spoons in it, they heated it afresh and partook of it themselves.

After a capital night in the loft and a good wash next morning, we breakfasted—I am thankful to say that there was some fresh soup—and soon afterwards set out on our journey. A few minutes brought us into the regular track of the Col d'Anterne, which I had crossed the previous year, and with no further difficulty we descended to Servoz and drove on to Chamouny.

So passed off our first day's training: the expedition was too long, we started too late, and we took no food, a combination of circumstances fatal to success on what otherwise would be a very easy commencement for a mountaineer without guides. Roger was unfortunately entirely knocked up, and parting from us returned to England, while Hargreave and I, after a day or two of rest, crossed the Col du Géant into Italy.

*** The tariff price for a guide for the Buet at Chamouny, is 15 or 20 francs.

THE BRUNNI GLACIER.

Dim and faint as the mists that break
At sunrise from a mountain lake.—*H. M. Parker.*

In Italy illness compelled me to part with Hargreave for awhile, but owing to the kind offices of Mr. E. Whymper, I recovered pretty rapidly, and crossed to Zermatt with him and Lord F. Douglas, immediately before the fatal accident on the Matterhorn.

Two or three days of rest and an ascent of Monte Rosa proved for me the best of remedies, and passing on to the Æggischorn, I crossed the Oberaarjoch with the late Professor Shirley and a friend, and rejoined Hargreave at the charming little inn of the Engstlen Alp, where there joined us the Rev. C. B. Hutchinson, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Utterson Kelso, and others with whom we made various new expeditions of interest, and some of considerable difficulty, in the neighbourhood without guides.

After a rather prolonged stay here, Hargreave and I and two of our friends crossed the Surenen, and ascended the Maderaner Thal to a hotel at its head, which was then scarcely completed. We intended hence to cross the Clariden Grat; but the weather was thoroughly bad, and it rained hard when we were called in the morning after our arrival, so prudence compelled us to give up so long a pass. Our two friends therefore returned, but Hargreave and I were anxious to reach Pontresina as soon as possible, to

which place we had sent our bags; so we determined, notwithstanding the weather, to attempt to force our way over the Brunni glacier to Disentis. The guide-books gave us no information as to the route, but the Ordnance sheet which Hutchinson had lent us, was a great help, and Zurfluh, an Amsteg guide, gave us some useful hints, although he assured us it would be useless for us to try to cross alone, particularly in such foggy weather.

Notwithstanding his predictions, however, we determined to start, and packed up some eatables; but, for the sake of light knapsacks, dispensed with wine, trusting to the cold mist to prevent feelings of thirst. When we started the weather cleared up for a short time, but it was for a few minutes only, and then we had to follow a well-marked path in the densest fog, the monotony of which was only broken occasionally by the snow and rain. In little more than two hours we reached some châlets at the foot of the glacier, where all track ceased; but there was nobody of whom to enquire the way.

At this stage we halted for nearly an hour, in hopes that the fog might lift and disclose to us the upper part of the glacier and our pass, but it pertinaciously oppressed us with its company; however we did not waste the time, as the reduced weight of our knapsacks testified when we resumed them.

As we were still unable to see to any distance, we decided on keeping up the glacier close to its east bank, and making our way until we reached our col. Soon, however, a dilemma presented itself, and we had to choose between

at least half-an-hour's step-cutting up an ice-wall and a climb over steep plates of smooth rock at its side, down which water was trickling. We afterwards learned that we might have avoided this dilemma by taking to the bank a little lower down, but the fog had there concealed the difficulties ahead.

We chose the rocks, as taking less time, and having surmounted them, we continued to climb up ordinary rocks for a little distance, and shortly took once more to the glacier.

A similar dilemma recurred before long; but while we stood deliberating, several avalanches of débris shot down the rocks, and warned us to take to the ice slope. This too was swept, though only to a slight extent, by falling stones, and with rapid strokes of the axe we cut our way up it. Soon after surmounting this difficulty we reached a broad snow saddle, at which point the clouds lifted a little and disclosed to us a glacier falling away to the east. But this we knew could not be our pass (it was, in fact, the Col d'Anzendiras), for our col led southward, and the descent was marked on the map as a rocky one. From this time the weather continued to improve, and the fog rolling away, we were able to strike across the glacier to the next col to the left, and before long in so doing we came upon a track in the snow, which at this level covered the glacier; following this, we reached in half-an-hour the true summit of the pass, whence we could see the Rhine winding like a silver thread through sunny meadows below.

We stopped to lunch on the summit, and while so occupied were surprised by a couple of guides, who climbed up

the rocks from below. They were on their way from Disentis to the Maderaner Thal, and were sufficiently astonished at the sight of two travellers there alone, but not too much so to be able to share our meal; we sent by them a message to assure our host at the hotel of our safety so far, and parting from them, we at once descended some easy rocks and rough slopes of débris to the pastures below, and, in three hours after quitting the summit of the pass, reached Disentis.

Glad enough we were to enter the comfortable inn of the town, where, as no one had previously passed without guides, we caused no little excitement.

THE SELLA.

> Long had they stood, locked in each other's arms,
> Amid the gulfs that yawned to swallow them;
> Each guarding each through many a freezing hour.—*Rogers.*

I HAD lost my compass while descending on débris from the Brunni Glacier, and was still rather lame from the shaking we received on that occasion, when, after having read for a few days at Pontresina, Hargreave and I determined at the end of August to try and cross by the Sella Pass into Italy without guides.

This had been an object of my ambition in the previous year, but the notoriously bad weather of the Engadine had then destroyed all possibility of making the attempt.

But now, one Wednesday afternoon, I sallied forth to

survey the glacier and to try to make out our route, of which the guide-books gave no particulars. By the time I reached the foot of the Rosegg Glacier it began to pour, and exploration consequently became impossible, so I returned, drenched to the skin, to Herr Gredig's at the Krone, where, however, supper soon mended matters.

Such weather certainly was not encouraging, but to give the thing a chance we ordered the landlord to call us at 3 A.M. if fine, reserving license of sleeping till 5 if the weather were moderate, and till 8 if it were decidedly bad. In any case we meant to quit the place on the next day for the Tyrol, and accordingly packed up our books, and so went to bed with quieted consciences.

The degenerate natives did not call us until 6 A.M., to my intense indignation, for it was brilliantly fine. But we hurriedly dressed, and after breakfast took our bags to the office to send them to Trafoi; but we were vexatiously delayed by having to write six German 'declarations' about them, as they were to cross the frontier; so that we were not ready to start till 8 A.M. This was very late to set off for a long glacier pass, but the day was too fine to walk over the Bernina high road, our only alternative; and therefore, as every one assured us that the weather would last, I put a bottle of wine into my knapsack and a piece of beef and some rolls into my pocket, while Hargreave carried more rolls, a few pears, and some chocolate. We then bade farewell to our friends, amid their mournful forebodings as to the probable result of our rashness,

and set forth along the shady road which leads to the Rosegg Glacier.

Our chain of misfortunes began with so late a start, a thing specially to be avoided when, in the absence of guides, the course has to be found as well as followed; since the depth to which, at a late hour, one sinks at every step in the softened snow, is a very serious inconvenience, though perhaps not the greatest. Before we had gone a mile I felt my back suddenly becoming wet, and found that the wine was leaking through my havresac, owing to its cork being too small for the bottle. We had no other cork with us, and in our hurry at starting had omitted our usual precaution of looking to this point; so taking the bottle out of the sac, I put it into my coat pocket, where it would be upright.

When we reached the foot of the glacier we had to choose between two courses marked on Mr. Ball's map (unfortunately we had not the Ordnance sheet), one up the first ice-fall of the Rosegg Glacier, and the other over the Agaglioul's rocks to the left. We ought undoubtedly, I afterwards learnt, to have kept to the ice, which is very practicable; but not feeling quite sure of this, and finding no direction in the guide-book, we took to the rocks. We had very rough scrambling among great stone blocks on a steep slope, and as we sprang from block to block I felt my leg wet. The bottle had been broken against a rock, and its contents—veritable aqua vitæ to us—were running into and through my pocket. Happily I was still rather lame in the knee, and had brought oil-silk and a long

bandage, &c., with me; of these I now bethought myself, and applying the silk to the aperture, I carefully bandaged the bottle, and so preserved the remainder of the wine; then tying more oil-silk over the cork, I put the bottle into my sac lest it should again be broken.

Our détour over the rocks caused a great waste of time; but on quitting them we proceeded without further difficulty up ice and snow slopes to the summit of the pass, where we were afforded a dry seat in the midst of the snow by a stone man—as the Swiss call the small heaps of stones which travellers usually make on summits. We reached this point at 3 P.M. The weather was still fine and the views really magnificent, especially on the Italian and Tyrolese sides. We ensconced ourselves in a couple of nooks of the 'man' and sat down to dine on our scanty store. Hargreave had rather lost his appetite, for we had been walking without cessation. I ate all my share, and we finished the wine between us, looking forward to milk at the expected châlets of Fellaria. As we rested, smoking and chatting, the weather began to change. The long ranges of the Tyrolese mountains were lit up by a broad slanting beam of green light, while a flood of red illumined their base.

Thunder rolled in the distance, but the storm passed on, to us, happily, an object of grandeur, not of dread. An hour's halt soon passed away, and leaving our names in the bottle, we started off again at 4 P.M. We crossed a sort of basin of ice, an hour's journey in width, held up,

as it were, at that immense altitude by four great peaks at the corners; mounting the other side of it, we crossed a second ridge, and then descended the long snow slopes to the side of the Fellaria Glacier.

Here the glacier, which terminates eventually in a fine ice-fall, lies high above the Fellaria valley, from which it is cut off by a long precipice, and at the foot of this we could see our goal—the châlets. We had been told that the main difficulty of the pass would be to hit off the passage down these rocks. And so it proved. We wandered along the upper edge, hunting for a passable couloir or gully by which to descend. The evening was cloudy, and sunset fast approaching. So, spurred on by fear of a night on the ice, we at last resolved to try a very ugly looking place, though the best we could find.

It was a couloir rather gravelly and not very steep at first, but becoming smoother and steeper. At last, as the darkness increased, I could no longer see to find holding or footing on the rock, and proposed to Hargreave a return to the top of the rocks where at least we could lie down and pass the night without risk of falling. But he protested energetically against this, telling me then for the first time that he had suffered from a sharp attack of pleurisy as a boy, and was always rather liable to a repetition of it. This was certainly hard news to a tutor responsible for a pupil's safety, and I felt very undecided what to do, but at last yielded to his solicitations, and gaining a secure hold on some rock for myself, I gradually lowered him by the rope.

'What do you see below?' I shouted, when he had got to his full tether of nearly forty feet.

'Oh! a beautiful large flat ledge a little below me on which we can both sleep.'

'Are you quite sure that it is large enough to lie down on?'

'Oh yes!'

'Can you descend to it when you have more rope?'

'Yes, I think so; but you will have to lower me down a sort of waterfall.'

This was a pleasant prospect for me when my turn to descend should come. However, as best I could, I got a few feet nearer to him, thus giving him more tether, and then taking in my hands the rope which bound us I lowered him down the 'cheminée' which he had described, having first planted my feet against a jutting bit of rock. Arrived at the ledge he said it was narrower than he expected, but would do; and as it would now have been very difficult to reascend in the dark, I faced the rock, and cautiously lowered myself, with the aid of my axe, to my companion. It was indeed a most meagre ledge, no broader where I alighted on it than a good-sized mantelpiece, and narrower where Hargreave had to move on to make room for me to stand. Turning round I looked below; there all was steep smooth rock down the couloir at first, and then a slope of débris. But we could not see far. A stone which we threw down bounded on and on, carrying others with it, till the sound died away in the distance. We stood for some time a little

uncertain whether to try to descend further or to remain where we were. Retreat was out of the question.

I was haunted with the remembrance of the terrible accident on the Matterhorn; and as we stood an avalanche of stones detached itself below, and rattled down the rocks. This made us decide to go no further.

It is impossible to describe, to one who has not experienced it, the effect which the solemn boom of an avalanche at night produces on a traveller in difficulties. I shall never forget coming down one night to Zermatt from the summit of the Col d'Evolena quite in the dark. Long white avalanches of ice fell in succession down the black rocks of the Matterhorn. They were of unusual duration. The massive obelisk of the mountain hid the moon, and towered weirdly up into the stars, as we threaded our way on the white ice below. The booms of the blocks of ice as they fell from the grave of the lost mountaineer,* thundered with crashing violence, and at last softly died away, lost in their echoes. The spirit at such a moment bows down before the Omnipotent—the Infinite—the Invisible.

But, to return to the Sella, we could not long stand musing: drops of rain began to fall, for the evening had long since become cloudy, so we unfastened the rope and coiled it up. Then we sat down, though with difficulty, and letting our legs dangle in the air, sat as far back on the ledge as the wall of rock behind would allow. We sidled

* Lord F. Douglas—an intrepid mountaineer—whose remains doubtless at this moment lie shrouded in the blue ice of the Matterhorn glacier.

along the ledge to as great a distance from the angle of the couloir as the former extended, for stones fell down at times which, as it was, once or twice grazed my foot. Our waterproofs we threw over us in front, and buttoned them behind our necks, making little tents of them. Then I drove the blade of my axe into a crack where the ledge was beginning to split off from the face of the rock, so that we might hold on by the handle. This was especially necessary for Hargreave's safety, as the ledge where he sat was very narrow, and slanted downwards, terminating altogether a little beyond. Indeed I too, in my easier position, was most thankful for it, whenever I felt drowsy, or wanted to move at all.

Hargreave, who could not eat, gave me some of his remaining food, and I had tobacco with which to solace myself. But in spite of this it was very cold all through the night, and very difficult to keep awake. But a doze would probably have terminated in a fatal fall. We repeated by heart to one another, we sang, and did what we could to keep one another awake.

It was very curious to watch and very hard to distinguish between the clouds and mountains in front of us. All looked vast, cold, and wan.

Many a solemn thought passed through our minds as we sat there uncertain of the morrow's fate, not secure indeed at any moment from some falling stone, but yet with a real feeling of calmness and content, for we had together committed ourselves to the great Father's care. Many may smile at this; others may feel a

confidence of such sort quite misplaced, where our own rashness and fault had brought us into so great a risk. I pause for a moment, and for one moment only, to reply: firstly, that however greatly rashness is in itself to be blamed, he would proceed to its utmost limit who in its consequent evils would cut himself off from the Source of all good and cease to pray; and, secondly, that it was no 'Deus ex machina' whom we invoked, but an ever-present One, of whom we sought calmness, discretion, and a Father's blessing on our precautions and efforts. I feel the more constrained to uphold prayer in such circumstances as rational, and also as a bounden duty, because at one time I quite shared in the opposite opinion, but by experience have learned its error.

As the night advanced the clouds passed away. One beautiful constellation shone through the couloir upon us, and a few falling stars helped by the interest of watching for them to keep us awake. At length—how long that night seemed I cannot describe—the stars began to wane, and we prepared to start. We had reached the place at 8 P.M., and dawn did not commence till 4 A.M., so we were stiff and cold from the long night's exposure. My friend, who had been feeling quite ill and could eat nothing, gave me half a piece of meat and some roll that he had still left, on which with a little brandy I breakfasted. With very great difficulty I rose to my feet, and moved along the ledge to the best point for descending. This was at first perpendicular, and then shelving rock, down which I began by lowering Hargreave and

then our sacs. Finally, fastening the rope to a projecting bit of rock, I descended with its aid myself, and then we jerked the rope down, and descended with greater ease, until in half an hour's time we quitted our couloir for slopes of rolling stone, which terminated eventually in grass.

We now had time to survey one another. It was difficult to say which of us looked more wretched, and whether green or purple was the predominating hue in our faces. But, at any rate, we had quitted the rocks, and thankful enough we were for that. We found the Fellaria châlets deserted, for the shepherds had already gone down the valley from their summer quarters; but we had a good wash at the spring, which was very refreshing. This enabled Hargreave to eat what little food he had remaining. By descending a noble valley, we reached the Osteria Antica, at the little village of Chiesa, in the afternoon, thoroughly tired out. We awoke the next morning none the worse for our adventure, and gainers, as we flattered ourselves, of prudence for the future; at any rate, we resolved never again to make a late start for a long day.

A month afterwards, Hargreave and I were repulsed in an effort to ascend the Orteler Spitze alone, owing to the lateness of the season. But I was more fortunate in crossing the easy Ofen Fuorcla—traversed then for the first time, it is believed, by an Englishman, a brief notice of which appeared at the time in the 'Alpine Journal.'

CHAPTER IV.

[1866.]

THE LÖTSCHBERG—THE LÖTSCHENLÜCKE—THE ALETSCH.

Ye are bound for the mountains—
Ah! with you let me go,
Where your cold distant barrier,
The vast range of snow,
Through the loose clouds lifts dimly
Its white peaks in air.
How deep is their stillness—
Ah! would I were there.—*Matthew Arnold.*

THE LÖTSCHBERG.

IN 1866 I reached Lausanne on Saturday, July 21, with a cousin of sixteen or seventeen years old, who was very anxious to see something of mountaineering. We spent a pleasant Sunday there at the house of a friend, which overlooked the lake. It was delightful to lie in the shade of a large cedar, and dreamily enjoy the blue water and the dark purple mountains beyond. There is a delicious luxury in such occupation, greatly enhanced by a not too obtrusive consciousness that a day or two will bring the hardest of work, the poorest of

food and shelter, and the wildest and most savage solitude in nature.

Mountaineers, indeed, often lose half their pleasures by plunging at once into desolation, without 'wasting,' as they say, a day; measuring out their holiday in the most business-like manner, 'doing' rather than *enjoying* nature's noblest scenery.

On Monday we went by rail to Bex, and then crossed over on foot, by Grion, to the Hôtel des Diablerets. It was a picturesque walk, and one during which we could quite well lose ourselves, as we proved by twice accomplishing that feat.

From the hotel we walked in three days to Kandersteg over the hills.

It is a great pity that this part of Switzerland is not better known. Of the multitudes who traverse the Rhone Valley, and complain bitterly, as all mountaineers do complain, of its great level waste overspread with stones and interspersed with a scant and wizened vegetation, few are aware of the very pleasant and easy variation of this journey to the Æggischhorn or the Oberland which our route to Kandersteg presents. From this village a multitude of passes, all more or less easy, diverge to Lauterbrunnen, to the Lötschen Thal and Bel Alp, or the Æggischhorn, or Gampel. The scenery between the Diablerets and Kandersteg is quite peculiar to that part of Switzerland. The path, which is almost throughout passable for mules, winds over the northern spurs of the ridge which lies between the Simmen Thal and the Rhone Valley, through beautiful

meadows of the freshest green, with pine woods stretching up to the base of the grey limestone buttresses and crags of the Diablerets, the Wildhorn, the Wildstrubel, and many another peak seamed with glaciers and waterfalls. The last pass of the series, that from Adelboden to Kandersteg, is more wild than the others, and more difficult to cross without guides; but on attaining its summit, there bursts on the spectator, in quite a startling proximity, the great snow mountains of the Bernese Oberland, with the one weird little lake which alone they possess, almost at his feet.

On our route we passed one night at the very comfortable little inn of An der Lenk, and another in what were then, at least, the rather wretched quarters of Adelboden. From this place we sent our knapsacks through to Kandersteg by post, on the promise that they would reach the place as soon as we did. But the post in this part of the world had fallen behind the times. On enquiry at Kandersteg, we found that our sacs not only were not forthcoming, but that it was quite uncertain when they might come, as there were no fixed days or hours for the arrivals, which depended entirely on the freaks of the postman.

A pleasant 'Republican' from the States, whom we rallied on this slight inconvenience of a perfectly free country, was compelled to own that there were somewhat similar country institutions in America. On one occasion, when making a long railroad journey in Virginia, arriving at some solitary junction he asked the guard how long the train would wait.

'Oh, as long as you like,' replied the latter; so the passengers dined, and afterwards strolled about. When most seemed to have returned, the guard called out to the stoker—

'Jim! do you see anyone coming?'

'No.'

'Then go ahead'—and the train went on.

However, our sacs did arrive in the evening. Hargreave, too, my old travelling friend, joined us here by appointment, to cross the glaciers to the Æggischhorn. Our first day's work was to take the Lötschberg to Kippel. As Hargreave was not in training, and Eddie, my cousin, had never been on a glacier, we resolved to take a porter to the foot of the ice, so as to be then fresh and vigorous. We were partly frightened into this measure of prudence by Mr. Ball's solemn caution that the pass should not be taken without a guide. A position of his which we felt bound to contest.

Samuel Oggi* was the name of our porter, a most amusing little lad of fifteen, with great black eyes and nut-brown face, dressed in a little brown woollen coat, just such as many a grown-up man wears thereabouts.

He looked very minute to carry our goods, but he declared he was exceedingly strong, and certainly he was merry, so we engaged him for a trifle.

Next day was very beautiful, and we set off in great spirits through the Gasteren Thal—a very wild glen. The

* Our friend figures again in 'The Tschingel Pass,' Chapter VI.

path for the first hour or two is moderately level, with great precipices on either side towering into the sky. We quitted the valley near a group of châlets, and after a very steep climb for an hour and a half up grassy slopes, we reached the foot of the glacier. Samuel had long been wishing to leave us. I am afraid he was a cunning little rascal, for he wished to cheat us as much as possible, but we held him to his bargain and kept him up to this point, where we saw that, so far as the glacier was concerned, we needed neither guide nor porter. He bounded out of sight as soon as we set him free, and we, having roped ourselves, proceeded on to the ice. Eddie, like every beginner, was delighted to employ for the first time the veil and spectacles which he had purchased. There is a singular pleasure in the sensations which arise on taking all the precautions against hitherto unknown risk and inconvenience, in the exhilarating air of one's first glacier. We found—probably to his disappointment—no difficulty whatever on the ice, and soon gained the summit of the pass, and enjoyed a very fine view. We spent more than an hour there, and then descended with ease. At the first châlet we reached, we obtained plenty of milk. Eddie was much the worse for it, having incautiously followed in quantity the example of his veteran companions, to one of whom, at any rate, two or three quarts form a very moderate allowance. Our downward progress was consequently considerably delayed, but at last we reached Kippel at three or four, all agreeing that, at any rate, the Lötschberg requires no guide.

I may as well add, to prevent mistakes, that on this occasion, as always, unless the reverse is expressly stated, we had Mr. Ball's guide-book and the Ordnance map.

*** A guide charges 10 to 12 francs for the Lötschberg.

THE LÖTSCHENLÜCKE.

Thy seas of ice and ice-bound promontories,
That change their shapes for ever as in sport.—*Rogers.*

FROM Kippel it is possible to reach the Æggischhorn by three or four different routes, of which the Lötschenlücke is much the finest. We had rather doubted whether Eddie would be able to accompany us over this pass, for his deep potations of milk aided by a cigar which he had smoked on the summit of the Lötschberg had made him seriously unwell.

Kippel boasts no inn,* but the curé gladly receives guests for certain pecuniary considerations; so, as we understood that we could procure meat there, we determined to stay at the parsonage rather than push higher up the valley, and so shorten the morrow's work.

Being hungry folk, we ordered dinner immediately, after one of us had secured the only pair of slippers which the house afforded.

It turned out that there was no fresh meat to be had, save a solitary lean cock, who, after a good deal of waiting, came up to dinner in his comb, but, to our intense indignation,

* There is now a new inn, very well spoken of, at Ried, an hour above Kippel.

without his breast, which had been doubtless reserved for our host. Think of that, for three people! Miserable soup and a pancake completed our dinner. Naturally, this fare did not conduce to Eddie's restoration; so we determined that he should next day go round by road, and meet us in the evening at the Æggischhorn.

Before turning in for the night we tried to engage a porter to the summit of the pass, but no one would go with us except for the whole expedition, since it would have been dangerous to return alone; so as we did not mean to pay one for the whole way, Hargreave arranged to send his sac round with Eddie, and I carried my own, which was light. We next taught Eddie a few German sentences to enable him to ask his way, and get his place in the diligence, which he could take at a village a few miles off, and then giving him leave to sleep *ad lib.* we turned in.

Next morning Hargreave and I were called at 2 A.M. and set off at 3 A.M.

It became a dull grey morning; and an hour or so after we started, when a shower fell, we almost decided upon returning to bed, but eventually we determined to try our fortunes, cheering ourselves with the thought that there was always a possibility of retreat.

We had a long walk up the valley, with the summit of our pass in view all the way; first along a rough char road, and then by a footpath. Several glaciers descended on either side, and in front was the long and steep Lange glacier, over which our course lay. After passing the last village of sennhuts, we proceeded over smooth rounded

rock and moraine to the glacier, on which we soon came to an ice-fall. Our course up this was rendered comparatively easy by an avalanche which had recently fallen, and with its débris filled up many of the chasms of the ice, so that we had but few steps to cut. We next came to a long snow slope which fatigued us very much, as the snow was soft, and we waded knee deep through it. By taking it, however, in turns to go first and make the holes, and by keeping our mouths cool with prunes, we got through our work pretty well.

But before we quite reached the rounded depression in the snow ridge which forms the pass we were covered with clouds and a snow storm had begun. There was a driving wind too from behind, and it was bitterly cold. Yet we were compelled to wait within ten yards of the summit, partly through fatigue and hunger, and partly because it was impossible to see more than a yard in front.

We had happily saved some of the meat which we had brought from Kandersteg for the Lötschberg; I had a bottle of cold tea, and Hargreave had wine, for we knew that after passing the highest village, three hours above Kippel, we should find no house or châlet; and the eighteen miles of glacier before us had necessitated our bringing a supply of bread from Kippel, so that we had enough to eat. So we wrapped ourselves up in our great coats, scooping a little hollow in the snow for a seat and another for the feet, from which we endeavoured to keep the cold snow by wrapping them in the paper which had surrounded our provisions.

At last the mist lifted a little, and we moved across the summit to the other side, and were out of the wind. Here we halted again, for the mist became almost immediately as thick as ever. Some excellent cigars which Hargreave's father had sent warmed us to some extent and occupied some time; but when it appeared useless to wait any longer, steering by our compass, we set off down the snow slopes; presently, however, we found ourselves going up hill, and I felt convinced that we were wrong by some rocks which we saw, and which, judging from the map, we ought not to have passed. For nearly two hours now we had to hunt for our way. Lest the iron of my axe might affect the magnetic needle, I occasionally struck it in the snow, and walked some yards from it to observe the compass. Hargreave rested by lying on the snow, while I every now and then took off my belt, to which the rope which attached us was fastened, and hunted for the way. At last he began to feel sick from the extreme cold after our severe exercise. Some tea revived him partially, and then he kept in motion with me, for he was becoming sleepy.

I was becoming very anxious now on his account, for the cold which invigorated me was clearly doing him harm; so I asked him to join me in silent prayer for guidance, and within five minutes afterwards we took a direction which proved to be the right one.* We were very thankful. To have retraced our tracks and returned

* The question of prayer under such circumstances has been already discussed. See 'The Sella.'

would, even if possible after the quantity of snow which had fallen, have been very melancholy and fatiguing. As it was, inspirited by hope of success, we rapidly descended the glacier and left much of the mist above us. We had, however, a very long trudge before us all down the Aletsch glacier to the Marjelen See, and it was already dusk when we were climbing over the shoulder of the mountain which lay between us and the hotel. Among the multitude of sheep tracks, we only managed to follow the right path by the marks left in the softened earth by the spikes in the alpenstocks of some recent tourists. A drizzling mist did not increase our desire to sleep out on the mountain side, and right thankful we were when, at nearly 9 o'clock at night, cow-bells, and at last lights, told us that we had reached, after our long and anxious day, the welcome shelter of Herr Wellig's hotel.

*** A guide charges from 20 to 25 francs for this pass.

THE ALETSCH.

> But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky,
> In the wild pomp of mountain majesty.

We found Eddie anxiously expecting us at the hotel, and our host—an old acquaintance—prepared for a couple of hungry travellers. The following day was Sunday, and I was very glad of its quiet rest. We arranged to walk up the next morning to see the view, and then to keep down

the Aletsch glacier to the Bel Alp, where I wished to pass the night before attacking the Aletschhorn. A gentleman in the hotel asked leave to join our party for the day, and we all four breakfasted at 6.30.

As we stood in the hall before setting out, Professor Tyndall, who was staying in the hotel, passed by, and finding that I was anxious to try the Aletschhorn without guides, offered to join me in the attempt. He had some business before he could leave the hotel, however, so we agreed to meet at the Bel Alp in the evening.

We then set off, in high spirits, and in the fresh air of a lovely morning, not paying much heed to the Professor's warning that we should find the Aletsch glacier unusually difficult that year, as he had himself experienced.

On the summit of the Æggischhorn we enjoyed a magnificent view of the glaciers and mountains around, and I had a capital opportunity of carefully surveying the final arête of the magnificent Aletschhorn, on which I hoped soon to stand. We then descended the mountain to the glacier below, halting in the first sheltered nook for our daily Bible-reading.

I mention the daily reading here, at the risk of incurring the charge of cant or hypocrisy, because it was connected with a singular circumstance, which shows that it is worth while allowing strangers a chance of sharing in such an occupation. In the following year, at Grindelwald one Sunday, a gentleman who, like myself, had been to the service, stepped up to me after it and claimed acquaintance. I could not at first in the least recall his features,

but he turned out to be the same who had joined us on this occasion. And he assured me that he had never enjoyed any day more, owing especially to the reading together on the mountain side which had been proposed.

But to proceed. We reached without difficulty the ice, on which at first it was easy enough to walk. The surface of the glacier was composed of great rounded lumps of ice —like rippled sand on a large scale—roughened by innumerable little grooves, formed by the melted ice trickling into deeper channels. We went up and down these mounds at a running pace in the keen wind which blew down from the Mönch and Jungfrau. Every now and then a long, deep chasm, narrow enough to clear with a bound, intersected our path as we raced along. But presently these crevasses became a serious difficulty from their frequency and size. A good deal of step-cutting became necessary. Our new acquaintance had never been on ice before, and his good temper and courage must have been sorely tried once or twice as we went down long and steep edges of ice, with deep blue gulfs on either side, all sitting straddle-legged, and descending gradually as I cut the steps. Presently we were compelled to take to the rocks of the right bank, as the ice was far too much broken for further progress. We kept along them for some time, until we were driven back once more to the glacier, where we were still much entangled in crevasses, although we had left the worst behind us. At last we finally quitted the ice at the foot of the steep ascent which leads up to the Bel Alp Hotel.

It was now past 4 P.M., and we were ravenously hungry, for, with the exception of a few prunes and bits of chocolate which one of us happened to have, we had provided no food for the journey, which does not require when the ice is easy more than five or six hours. Our joy was correspondingly great on discovering a cow grazing close to the glacier. We induced the shepherdess to milk her at once for us; the cow was recalcitrant, but in vain, and with renewed vigour we mounted in half an hour or so to the top of the Bel Alp, where we found the Professor awaiting us, and on the point—so late were we—of setting out with axe and rope to see if we had tumbled into a crevasse.

A good dinner and sound sleep followed, though the latter was not of long duration, for at 4 o'clock next morning I set off with Tyndall for the Aletschhorn. We each carried our own provisions, which included a bottle of champagne to reward our toils; our pace was rapid, being unfettered with guides. The morning was deceptively beautiful, though the experienced eye of my companion detected signs of bad weather in the glorious tints of sunrise.

We accomplished without difficulty or doubt as to the way, in three hours, half of the whole expedition (reckoned by time) to the summit, but now made a halt to consider the weather, for the sky was rapidly darkening. In order to delay our final decision we unpacked our knapsacks for breakfast, but scarcely were our provisions spread out on the snow than they were scattered by a sudden gust of

wind, the precursor of a veritable tornado; and snow began to fall, while a thick black fog rapidly hurried on from the north-west.

We had nothing to do but to yield to nature; so collecting as best we could our goods we packed up and hastened cautiously down the snow slope until we reached bare ice, and secured our retreat.

During the rest of the day it snowed and blew very hard, so it was well that, however reluctantly, we gave up the attempt. For three weeks we remained together in hopes of renewing our attack, but each day the weather was against us, and at length we quitted the neighbourhood finally, the Professor for England, and I for the sole peak which the weather of that summer allowed me to ascend—though not unaccompanied with guides—that of the Schreckhorn.

CHAPTER V.

[1867.]

PART I.

THE TSCHINGEL—THE WETTERHORN I.—A WALK ROUND THE WETTERHORN—THE WETTERHORN II.—THE TSCHINGEL.

> Come on, sir; here's the place: stand still. How fearful
> And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low.—*Shakspear.*

THE TSCHINGEL.

A HETEROGENEOUS party met together at Lausanne early in July, with the express object of mountaineering without guides. An Oxford friend, whom I shall call Brown, met me in town by appointment; he had once before travelled with me in Switzerland, but his glacier experience was limited to one easy pass—the Sand Grat. As became poor students, we booked ourselves third class at Charing Cross by the night train to Paris. At Folkestone we picked up a fellow collegian of Brown's, a scholar of his college, who wanted three weeks' recreation before the agonies of an honour examination. He had never been in the Alps before, but was strong and persevering, and may be distinguished by the name of Winkle, which appellation indeed he invariably bore among us. At Paris we

just looked in at the Exhibition, and then hastened on to Lausanne, where we had arranged to pick up the fourth member of our party—Mr. J. H. D. Matthews, of University College, Oxford, who like Winkle had never before been in Switzerland.

We joined him one Saturday, and on Monday morning we all set off by steamer to Bouveret, whence we hastened by train and diligence to Sierre. Here we shouldered our knapsacks, and set off late in the afternoon for Leukerbad at the foot of the Gemmi Pass. It is a beautiful walk up from Sierre, and as daylight waned the soft light of a full moon streaming down upon the black precipices which hem in the baths produced an unusually striking effect.

Next morning we set off at five, in a bracing frosty air, for Kandersteg. We soon raced up the mule-path to the summit of the Gemmi, and then, concealing our knapsacks among the rocks, made an excursion to the left up the Lämmeren Glacier, which descends from the Wildstrubel, so as to gain some notion of ice-work before attempting the Tschingel next day. As we were none of us in training, some snow slopes which we ascended expanded our lungs and reduced our weight considerably; we had a few crevasses to jump and a few steps to cut; but our excursion was limited by our speedily-increasing appetites, which compelled us at length to turn, and after regaining our sacs to hasten somewhat exhausted down to the little inn of Schwarenbach.

Here we lunched heartily on such fare as the resources of our host could supply, and then proceeded on our way.

About an hour before reaching Kandersteg there met us an old friend of mine in the person of Samuel Oggi, a little fellow who had been our porter for the Lötschberg, and who was now on the look out for tourists to whom he might offer his services. Before I saw who it was he had rushed up, and throwing his arms round me gave me a most hearty hug, to the great surprise and amusement of my friends. After a little chat he insisted on coming with us, and Brown who was tired gave him his knapsack to carry. As we approached the hotel, however, wishing to look more like a guide, he insisted on carrying my sac too, and I gave him in addition my rope and axe to his intense delight. Laden with all these he proudly stalked before us to my old quarters at the Victoria Hotel, which we reached at about 5 P.M.

Brown was quite exhausted by his exertions, which for a first day had certainly been severe; so he made up his mind to give up the Tschingel, and to go round by road to Lauterbrunnen. He could speak no German and knew nothing of the way, so to Samuel's unspeakable satisfaction we engaged him to accompany our friend. We had next a delicious bath in a clear stream which meandered through the meadows, and then after achieving dinner, and seeing to good nails being put into our boots, we ordered provisions for the morrow and went early to bed.

One of the discomforts of mountaineering without guides, for me at least, is that a rather sleepless night, engaged in delusive difficulties, usually precedes an ex-

pedition; and this occasion was no exception. In Mr. Ball's guide-book there is a description, which certainly is rather unnecessarily alarming, of a little difficulty encountered on the pass to Lauterbrunnen; and dreams of the 'Tschingeltritt,' as the difficult rocks are called, disturbed the quiet of my repose while I thought of my two remaining companions, neither of whom had ever climbed a rock. However, we rose in good time, and started at 3 o'clock in the starlight, leaving Brown to his slumbers.

Our landlord drove us to the entrance of the Gasteren Thal, and then we proceeded alone. At first our path was the same as I had followed the previous year in crossing the Lötschberg, but soon the two diverged. On reaching the last châlet before the ice we had a good draught of milk, an advisable plan as economising for the event of accident the provisions in one's knapsack.

Winkle, who had brought a home-made sac, was the object of a good deal of objurgation, owing to the frequent halts which the freaks of the aforesaid article compelled us to make. At one time it would disgorge its contents, at another fall off his shoulders altogether, or again it would numb his arms by the tightness of its pressure upon some muscle. At last I bound Winkle and his knapsack securely together with some twine, and we proceeded steadily up the ice. There was no difficulty of any sort in reaching the summit of the pass, except that we were rather tried by the ascent of snow slopes so immediately on coming out, laden, too, as we were with

our sacs. On the summit we halted for an hour and enjoyed the unusually fine view, not without a visit to our larders.

We were just about to pack up and start, when we saw two men slowly coming up the snow slope from Lauterbrunnen. They were evidently weary, and with their spectacles and veils on they had not yet seen us. We gave them a shout which encouraged them to come up rather more rapidly. They appeared to be a traveller with his guide, and as from his face and dress the gentleman looked like a German, I saluted him in what I conceived to be his own language; receiving no response I tried French, whereupon he replied 'Je parle Anglais.' But when we began to speak English he was too worn and weary to do more than repeat 'Je parle Anglais.' He looked quite ill; but luckily we had some cold tea, of which we gave him a cup. He revived considerably under its influence, and asked for a second. In twenty minutes he had quite regained his vivacity, and turned out to be a pleasant Irishman. His guide had only brought wine, brandy, bread, cheese, and meat, which he felt too ill to touch; so we gave him some bread and butter and honey, and left him thoroughly happy. He spoke French a little, but after a most amusing fashion, though it was somewhat wasted on his guide who spoke German. But his main point was understood. 'Je serai plus beau à descendre' (*sic*). They were amazed at finding we had no guides, and I think the Irishman rather doubted our sanity. At any rate, for his own part he

resolved that, guide or no guide, when once he reached Kandersteg he would never set foot upon ice again. We parted with mutual good wishes for our respective journeys; he with true Irish hospitality insisting that we should all come and stay with him in Ireland, but without even hinting at his name and address. His tracks in the snow saved us all consultation of maps until we lost them on reaching the rocks above the Tritt. Here for a long time we could not find the way to descend, but our search was at last rewarded by some Alpenstock marks in the grit, which led us to an easy track down, and soon we had passed all difficulties, and were on the lower level of the glacier.

At the Steinberg Alp we found plenty of milk, and rested once more to enjoy the view, and then descended to Trachsellauenen, two hours above Lauterbrunnen, where we meant to pass the night. As is often the case, we lost our way for some time in a wood quite close to our destination, continually finding ourselves cut off by small precipices; but about four we eventually reached our very comfortable little inn. A chamois *ragoût* made a capital dinner, assisted as it was by a bottle of champagne, which Matthews and Winkle insisted on presenting to their amateur guide.

*** A guide charges about 20 francs for this Pass.

THE WETTERHORN I.

Oh! where is the land where friends
Meet in those silent hours,
When the starlight dew descends
Upon the sleeping flowers?—*H. M. Parker.*

After crossing the Tschingel Glacier, we rejoined Brown and went on to Grindelwald, with the express purpose of trying our hands on the Wetterhorn, which, for two or three years, I had been longing to surmount without professional aid. We were compelled to rest for a day or two after our arrival, as the weather was bad, and contented ourselves with making expeditions to the Eismeer of the lower Grindelwald Glacier, where there was plenty of scope for testing steadiness of hand and foot, and for acquiring a little practice both on rock and ice.

On the following day Matthews and I went to reconnoitre the base of the Wetterhorn. There is at the 'Adler' Hotel an admirable MS. account of this mountain by a French gentleman, and with the aid of his sketches and directions we found our way without difficulty to the Enge, a narrow little ledge on the face of the cliffs, which at that time* presented the only known path from Grindelwald to the summit. Our climb up to this point was not without its difficulties, along a roughly worn track over a jagged slope of rocks, interspersed here and there with grass. Just before it reached the Enge the track had been carried

* A more direct route has since been achieved.

away by a landslip or avalanche, and here great caution was necessary in crossing a bare slope of rock, a slip upon which would have hurled us down into a *chevaux de frise* of ice below.

The ledge called the Enge is not more than two or three feet broad in parts, and winds round the angle of the mountain above a precipice of some thousand feet. There are one or two dwarf pines, however, which at once veil the depths and afford good holding in turning the corner.

It was now time for us to retrace our steps if we were to catch the table d'hôte, as we eventually did, after carefully noting our way so that we might more easily find the track when starting in the night for the mountain itself.

As Sunday was quite fine we ordered the servants to call us that night at 11.30, so as to have a long day on Monday, for owing to the anger of the guides at our determination to try the mountain alone, we were forced to dispense with the saving of five or six hours which is effected by most travellers, who sleep at the Gleckstein, a meagre cave some height above the Ober Grindelwald Glacier. The guides had deterred all the porters from carrying blankets and fuel for us to this place, and it would have been hopeless to attempt to sleep there without any means of keeping out the cold. However, as one party at least had, we knew, successfully accomplished in a single day the whole ascent from Grindelwald itself, we resolved to make a similar effort.

We were unfortunately not called until 12.30, when we made a rapid toilette, and, with the exception of

Brown, laid in a good breakfast. He felt that it was a most improper hour for such a meal, and announced his determination to go to bed again and give up the mountain, but goodnaturedly acted as porter for half an hour and carried our provisions.

It was a brilliant moonlight night, but the shadows were very dark, and we soon lost our way in the meadows; however, we managed to keep to the right general direction, and meeting no worse difficulties than torrents through which we waded, and ravines up and down which we scrambled through brushwood and overhanging boughs, we soon found ourselves for a second time climbing up to the Enge, where our previous reconnoitre proved of the greatest use to us, for without knowing the ground we could not have ventured in the deceptive moonlight to cross the site of the landslip.

As we wound round the giddy track of the Enge we suddenly gained a view, as if from fairy land, of Jupiter floating in a transparent jet-black sky over the cliffs of ice of the Schreckhorn range. Inspirited by the beauty of the scene we walked quickly along, following without difficulty a path on grass slopes which gently descended almost to the level of the ice. Presently the track became fainter and fainter, as the grass was more and more thickly covered with stones which had fallen from the rocks above; and at length we felt conscious that we were not on any path at all. Somewhere hereabouts we ought, as we knew, to find a series of steps cut on the face of the rocks by which to continue our ascent; but whether on

the rugged bank of the glacier to our right, or on the precipice at our left, we had no means of telling.

Spreading out our party of three, we walked on and surveyed both sides carefully, but without success, until we arrived at the foot of a formidably steep grass slope, which, though dangerous, from its slippery and treacherous nature, afforded us the only hope of reaching our destination. By it we began to mount, and Winkle, eager to reach the summit and utterly despising such trifles as grassy mounds, diverged a little to the right, and passing to the front, chose his own course. But soon, while Matthews and I were steadily progressing, urgent entreaties for assistance came from Winkle, and, on looking up, we saw him hanging on by some short grass, which afforded but little hold to his hands, and still less to his feet. It was impossible not to laugh at the sight, especially as he was, for a time at any rate, pretty safe; but after a delay—sufficient to give him a wholesome dread of rashness in future—one of us mercifully went to his rescue. After a long and very steep climb, we all reached the plateau above. It was to avoid this slope that the steps had been cut in the rocks, but we had now surmounted the difficulty itself, and were soon rewarded by finding a track down a little gulley, which led us across a cascade to a fairly-marked path up the mountain's side. This gave us an assurance that we were once more on the orthodox way—no slight relief to men without guides.

Here, between five and six, we halted for breakfast, in a magnificently wild glacier valley, lying between the

Schreck- and Wetterhörner, and entirely cut off from view of the grassy slopes and meadows below. From this point we proceeded straight up towards the base of the Wetterhorn, leaving to our left a great stone, which we afterwards found was the Gleckstein.

Our course now lay over steep slopes of débris of a large size, the hollows of which were filled with snow. Soon the whole surface was snow-clad, and presented a footing of the most unpleasant and tedious kind. Care had to be taken at every step, lest a sprain or fracture should result from slipping through the snow down the side of a boulder into some angular hollow of unknown depth. Our pace was therefore necessarily slow, and at times, moreover, we halted to survey the rocks above, and to choose the best point at which to attack them. From Grindelwald they had appeared to be of small height and tolerable ease, but the nearer we came to their base, the steeper and higher they appeared. At last only a small glacier or slope of *nevé* severed us from them, and we once more halted on an island of rock projecting through the ice, and fell to work on our victuals, which task accomplished, we divided what remained into two portions, one to be taken with us and the other to be left, so as to lighten our knapsacks and provide a meal on our return. We agreed, after crossing the *nevé*, to mount by a somewhat broad snow *couloir*, which was evidently a path for avalanches, judging from the heaps of snow and blocks of stone and ice at its base; but it was still early in the day, and the *couloir* lay in the shade of the mountain, so we were likely to

have it to ourselves. When we climbed higher, we found the snow frozen so hard as to require the use of the axe. This made us determine after a while to quit the *couloir* for the rocks, to which course we were urged, moreover, by the stones which occasionally fell whizzing through the air from above. We had some difficulty in effecting this, but succeeded by cutting steps down and up the sides of a somewhat treacherous chasm. We were, in truth, as we afterwards ascertained, to the right of the point where the rocks are usually taken. These gave us good holding at first, but changed for the worse, becoming steeper and smoother, while our difficulty was increased by loose rubble of the most treacherous nature, with which they were interspersed.

Presently, to my inexpressible consternation, both of my friends complained a little of giddiness. The scene was terribly wild, and it was no wonder that a couple of men out for the first time among the mountains should experience a certain trial of nerve on these gigantic precipices. There was one column towering above us on the left, nearly to the summit of the final peak, which produced a remarkable effect on Winkle, for though we were below and at some distance from it, he could not look up at it without giddiness. However, I put the best face on the matter, and we sat down on as secure a place as we could find, and made a meal, drinking half of the bottle of champagne with which we had hoped to rejoice on the summit. Our feast was brief, for we had, in order to remain on our seats, to hold on with one hand all the time; and little streams of

water found their way into our pockets, which did not encourage a protracted halt.

Once more we pushed on, and soon, to our joy, descried first one, then a second, and finally a third *man* appearing over a ridge of rock and descending towards us. We *jodelled* and shouted, but no response came; ere long, however, we perceived by their rope and spectacles, that he party consisted of a gentleman and two guides. As we drew nearer, the gentleman shouted :—

'Is that Mr. Girdlestone?'

'Yes.'

'I thought so, from the hat.'

It turned out to be Mr. Foster, a gentleman with whom I had tried the Jungfrau two years previously, and to whom on that occasion an ancient and homely straw hat which I wear had been an object of chaff, and doubtless of envy.

Our joy at the sight of human beings had arisen, it must be confessed, in part from the unsentimental hope of replenishing our larder; but here we were sadly disappointed, for the Wetterhorn, which was sharpening our own appetites, had served our friends the same kind turn, and they had nothing left to eat. Foster and his guides had mounted from Rosenlaui, and were descending to Grindelwald, whither they proceeded, after warning us that it was impossible, at so late an hour, to reach the summit, and offering us a guide to help us. Of course we did not avail ourselves of this kind offer, but parting from them proceeded on our way, keeping, however, an

eye on them occasionally, so as to observe their course, with a view to our own descent, for we had no wish to return by our morning's route.

In an hour's time we reached the point where they were when we first saw them, and here Matthews declared against going on further; I quite agreed with him, but Winkle, with indomitable courage, was all for proceeding. We were on the crest of a ridge of rock running down the mountain side, and further advance was becoming more difficult, apparently; however, at Winkle's suggestion, I unbelted myself, so as to be free from the rope, and went on a little way alone, to inspect the rocks. There appeared to be an hour's work for men in our weary state before we could reach the base of the final cone, which Foster had told us was in bad condition, and which is usually laborious and requires vigour, so I returned; and as it was now 2.30 P.M., we gave up our attempt, and, sitting down, finished the food we had brought.

It is one of the hardest parts of mountaineering without guides to set out resolved to return unsuccessful if necessary. The temptation to go beyond the limits of strength, daylight, and prudence is unchecked by the cool advice of a guide, who often looks to safety and a return to his wife and family as the main point to be connected with his special mode of earning a livelihood. It was very depressing to us to turn our backs upon the final peak, when all difficulty in *finding* the way was overcome. But prudence conquered; and though the guides below might jeer, we had at least the satisfaction of knowing

that two of them had seen the progress we had actually made, while we were sanguine of success on a second attempt.

We found that the rocks were much easier to descend than to ascend, and Foster's route, which we followed in the descent, was a great improvement on the one we had taken in the morning. Before finally quitting them, we once more made a halt, to enjoy the view under the soothing influence of tobacco; for during the latter part of our ascent I at least had been too anxious for much quiet enjoyment. We soon crossed the belt of glacier below, and reached our depôt of food, where we ravenously consumed our store. We were now becoming very tired, but hurried on so as to reach the grass slope before nightfall, as we could not have descended it in the dark, and we hoped, moreover, to avoid it altogether by finding the steps in the rocks. When we arrived at the grass, all alpenstock and foot-marks failed us on the short elastic turf, but in the gulley which I have before mentioned they had been plainly visible, showing that so far we were on our predecessor's tracks. After a long search, we discovered some footmarks on a patch of snow which bridged over a chasm between the grass and one of the most hopeless-looking smooth slopes of rock I ever saw. I felt sure that the marks were Foster's tracks, and crossed to the rock. My comrades, however, declined to follow; but I went on, and finding scratches cut in it, I shouted out that I should go on, and so induced them to follow.

It was now about 7 P.M., and as the sky was covered

with clouds, the light began to fail. Winkle followed first; but when he had reached the middle of the snow bridge, it cracked loudly under him, so back he ran to Matthews, declaring that it was impossible to come. However, at length the obstacle was crossed safely, and all were on the rocks. These were exceedingly slippery, but rendered quite practicable by the steps which some chamois hunter, it is said, had cut in them. After quitting these, we lost our way once or twice in the dark, before reaching the Enge, from which point we cautiously descended, partly by the aid of vivid flashes of lightning which now frequently lit up the darkness for a moment. At length we safely reached the meadows below, where we sat down by a fountain and slaked the thirst which was parching our tongues. It was now eleven at night, and we were still nearly two hours from Grindelwald, and could hardly keep our eyes open from fatigue; but we pushed on, preferring a bed in a hotel to an empty châlet in the storm which was evidently brewing. One of my ankles began to be very painful, and I had to sit occasionally; so Winkle parted from us, hoping to reach Grindelwald before the rain commenced. For my part, wet through as we had been by crossing some torrents which were swollen by the sun's action on the snow, and thoroughly tired, I felt the storm to be a trifle, as did Matthews, and we tramped slowly on; not without warning Winkle that he would probably lose his way, which, as we subsequently found, he did, and after miserably wandering about between two torrents, turned into an empty cowshed, where, wetted to the skin by the

storm, he stayed till the rain ceased, and the moon shining out enabled him to find his way.

Meanwhile we proceeded slowly, and, when within three quarters of an hour of the hotel, met two guides with food, sent by Foster to search for us on the Wetterhorn, for he knew to how poor a state our larder was reduced, and every one had expected that we could not cross the Enge in the dark, and must be benighted on the mountain-side. They were both men whom I had employed in former years, and quite forgot their recent anger in joy at seeing us safe. There happened to be a wayside restaurant close by; so, as the storm was raging, we woke up the sole inhabitant, and, turning in, lighted a fire and warmed and fed ourselves. This done, we passed on with the guides, and reached Grindelwald at 2 A.M., after an absence of twenty-five hours, most of which time had been spent in exercise.

The guides were perfectly astonished at the amount of our success, and Peter Baumann, a first-rate young guide, who had been up the Schreckhorn with me the previous year, volunteered to act as porter to the Gleckstein when we told him that we meant to try it again.

We had a long sleep, and, when at length we arose next morning, met with a hearty welcome from our friends. After breakfast we arranged to start the next day for the Gleckstein, taking Peter as porter so far. Mr. Vaughan Pryce, a gentleman whom I had met the previous year, agreed to accompany us; and this business over, we resigned ourselves to complete idleness for the rest of the day.

However, when Wednesday came, Matthews had passed a bad night, and Winkle, who kept up best at the time, was broken down, so we agreed to postpone the attempt for a week or two; and as I wanted some glacier air, Pryce agreed to try the Mönch Joch without guides, and Matthews arranged to meet us at the close of the week at the Æggisch-horn; but Winkle was obliged to return to England.

Peter willingly exchanged the Gleckstein for the Eigher Höhle as our destination, though, as was his bounden duty, he assured us that we should certainly fail in our attempt to reach the Æggischhorn.

Dimidium facti qui cœpit, habet.—*Horace.*

A WALK ROUND THE WETTERHORN.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.—*Wordsworth.*

In the afternoon of Wednesday, Pryce and I bade farewell to our many friends, and set forth with Peter Baumann, all heavily laden. The Eigher Höhle is an uncommonly cold place, and we took four rugs, in addition to our food and the necessaries we were likely to require during a week's absence. At the little hut of the Bärenegg, where visitors to the Eismeer are wont to obtain refreshments, we loaded ourselves with firewood, and, crossing the glacier, soon reached the grassy slopes at the base of the Eigher.

The weather, which in the morning, though not fine, was promising, had now changed for the worse, and a drizzling rain on the lower slopes became, as we mounted higher, fog and snow. This was not a very bright promise for the morrow; but having gone so far, we determined to proceed to the cave and await our chances there. It was with great difficulty that Peter made out its exact locality in the fog, and when at length, after a six hours' climb, we reached it, we found the entrance half choked with snow, and the spring of good water inside lost in the débris which formed the floor.

The cave, owing to the care of the guides, yields a certain amount of accommodation in the way of pots and pans, and of damp hay on which to sleep. But our fuel was unfortunately very wet, and the fire, as soon as it had yielded enough smoke to fill the cave, went out. After the third or fourth trial, our perseverance was rewarded; we filled a pan with snow, and set it on the fire to melt. Soon a fragrant jorum of chocolate was brewed; eggs were beaten up in it, the bottle of cream we had brought was poured in, and supper began.

Now came the much dreaded bedtime; the small extent of our fuel forbade any attempt at keeping up a fire through the night, and the cold fog, chilled by the fast-falling snow, filled the cavern. We rolled as closely together as we could on the hay, and covered ourselves with the rugs, after reading aloud from a German New Testament. Peter always enjoyed this; indeed, he used generally to chat about the chapters afterwards, and I believe

many guides would be grateful if their masters would read to them a few verses of the Bible in their own language. At least, I have always found it to be so. Peter and I smoked most of the night, to keep ourselves warm. Pryce was no smoker, but nature generally balances advantages, for he was a snorer, as we learnt when he dropped comfortably off to sleep. We two hardly slept at all, and Peter occasionally went out to survey the weather, and as often reported dense fog and sleet; so we stayed in hay till nearly five, when we rose and breakfasted, with the fullest intention of returning to Grindelwald.

But suddenly, when we had almost finished breakfast, the mists rolled away instantaneously, and revealed a glorious view of sunlit glacier below our feet. Pryce was still bent upon returning, and would on no account consent to proceed without a guide. I, too, agreed that such a proceeding would be rather dangerous, owing to the new snow; so I proposed to Peter to cross with us, if he would consent to take us up the Jungfrau afterwards without other guides or porters. This he promised to do; and Pryce at length consenting, we packed up and prepared to start. We had of course only the food intended for two, including not more than one bottle of wine and a half bottle of cold tea, but we added to our store a roll, which we found in the cave, and which must have wintered there, for we were the first this year to cross the pass; glad enough, too, we were of this windfall.

We were thus reduced to crossing this fine pass, the Mönch Joch, with a guide. But a most pleasant fellow

and capital guide he is, and, so far as I have experienced, without any of the ordinary faults of his class.

I accordingly give no details of our passage, beyond adding that we had a magnificent day, and considerable difficulty from the state of the snow. At the Faulberg hut, on the Aletsch glacier, we found more bread, to our joy, and at 8.30 P.M. reached the Æggischhorn.

Next day we returned to the Faulberg, after an explosion on the part of Wellig, our landlord, about only taking our own one guide for the Jungfrau. Such a thing, he declared, had never been done before. But at last, as we were old friends, he became peaceable, though he grimly predicted that we should never reach the summit. But he was doomed to disappointment, for, though the Jungfrau *arête* was hard ice—instead of being, as we had expected, snow—the ascent was safely made, and we returned on Saturday evening to find Matthews and Brown awaiting us.

On Monday I took a holiday, as my feet and hands were suffering severely from the intense cold we had experienced on the Jungfrau. Pryce, who had also suffered considerably, parted from us here, and Brown accompanied him on a luxurious visit to the Italian lakes.

On Monday evening Jackson, a Cambridge man, arrived, and agreed to try the Finsteraarhorn with Matthews and myself. He had two guides, and Matthews took one, while I was allowed to accompany the party without one, carrying, of course, my own *sac*. On Tuesday we all went to the Faulberg, to sleep there once more. The sky was

very gloomy, but we rose at 1 A.M., taking time by the forelock, for we hoped to make a pass over the Finsteraarhorn to Grindelwald. By the time we reached the foot of the *arête* which leads up this peak, we were enveloped in clouds, and it began to snow; so I proposed giving up the mountain, and crossing the Oberaar Joch to the Grimsel, urged to this by bitter experience of climbing in snowstorms. The guides agreed; but Matthews and Jackson both wished so much to ascend a high mountain, that we went on a little, to the extreme pain of my frost-bitten fingers, which soon felt the cold from the ice, snow, and rock to which we were obliged to cling in climbing.

Before very long, my companions agreed that pleasure was certainly not likely to be a concomitant of the excursion, and we returned again to the bottom of the mountain as soon as possible, to try and find our way over the Oberaar Joch; for we were all against a return to the Faulberg or the Æggischorn over the glaciers, and there would be fun and difficulty in finding the way to the Grimsel. I had crossed the pass once before, so knew something of the way myself; but as we had with us three firstrate Grindelwald guides, who had often been over it, we felt that we might go anywhere.

We soon found the regular track on the rocks of the Rothhorn, and halted under the shelter of a large stone for breakfast; but when we again took to the ice, difficulties about our route arose in the blinding snow and mist. The leading guide began to take the wrong direction, as both the other guides and I agreed. However, he persevered

for a while, and then yielded his post to another, but with very indifferent success. We held frequent consultations, but each gave a different opinion, and consequently we followed, during short intervals, wholly different directions, and were vainly circling about in the snow. I felt that if their knowledge of me would give me any influence with the guides, now was the time to use it. It was a delicate matter to offer advice, for guides are responsible, and therefore naturally give the orders on a glacier. But I now insisted that one course should be thoroughly tried, and when that was proved to be wrong, but not till then, another; for, without any one chief, we were adopting no plan, and were likely to be lost altogether.

The guides consented, although a flame of discontent occasionally broke out. I had, happily, the Ordnance sheet, and knew from it that, wherever we now might be, our pass could only be E. or N.E. or S.E., and I resolved to try these directions in turn. So we kept steadily up one glacier; but on arriving at its summit, we found ourselves on a ridge, absolutely cut off from further progress by a sheer precipice below us. (I believe, from consulting the map, that the ice beyond this precipice was the Münster Glacier.) Here, of course, the guides were rather triumphant; but, after a little food, I quietly insisted on descending again upon our tracks, and trying our second direction—viz. the N.E. one. The snowstorm had gradually been changing into a hailstorm, and the west wind drove the hail sharply into our faces as we descended. The cold was intense, but the mist lifted for

a few seconds just at the critical moment when we were beginning our N.E. course, and enabled us to avoid a mountain, up which we might perhaps otherwise have climbed by mistake. Leaving this to our right, as a barrier between us and our former course, we kept up another glacier, and I began to feel confident that we were now gaining the col. The higher we mounted the more our spirits rose, and the guides began to think that at last we were right, and finally we all gave a shout of triumph, as we felt the downward slope of the snow in the direction we were taking. We had crossed the col! and that, too, in a more amusing way than without guides, for we had turned the tables and were leading them.

We now rapidly descended, until we passed below the clouds, when we halted for dinner, and afterwards, without further adventure, reached the Grimsel, wet and tired; hot baths, however, enabled us to assist very creditably at the duties of *table d'hôte*.

Jackson had purposed to cross the Strahleck next day, and was called by his guides at two A.M.; but he wisely preferred repose, after the very hard work of the previous day, and, paying them off, dismissed them. Matthews had already paid his guide, for we two meant to try the Wetterhorn next, and Jackson now agreed to join us in the attempt. We sauntered down, after a late breakfast, to Imhof, where we slept, in hopes that the weather might improve. Next morning it appeared very bad, but we had nothing better to do than to wait, and about midday we were rewarded by a change in the sky.

We intended now to try the Wetterhorn from this side, by the Gauli Glacier, for there was a shepherd's hut close to the ice, where we could sleep. Neiger, a brother of this shepherd, was a guide at Imhof, and we engaged him to carry our knapsacks and provisions up to the hut. We thought him rather extortionate in his demands; but his brother, the shepherd, was quite the reverse, and a very sociable companion. The walk from Imhof up the Urbachthal is of itself very fine, and we greatly enjoyed it. The châlet we found to be comfortable, and possessing two vast beds, each of which consisted of a pair of cases of sacking filled with hay. No cold can reach a sleeper packed between such pillows. There were three of us to occupy the two beds, and a toss allotted to me a whole one, while the others shared the second. We chatted merrily over our meal, although the sky outside had become thoroughly gloomy; a good night followed, with no unseasonable awaking, for the weather had become quite hopeless. So, after breakfast, we returned to Imhof, and reached Grindelwald the same evening.

The next day, Sunday, was most welcome, for we had been pretty hard at work. We found many of our old friends still here; but Jackson was compelled to return to England. Matthews and I meanwhile determined once more to attack the Wetterhorn.

He hasteth well that wisely can abide.—*Chaucer.*

THE WETTERHORN II.

Though high above the sun of glory glow,
And far beneath the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head:
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

Byron.

PETER BAUMANN had promised to act as porter to the Gleckstein on our next trial of the mountain. But, unluckily, he was now absent for an indefinite period from Grindelwald, so it was of no use to wait for him. The other guides were more angry with us than ever, for they thought that we had robbed them of Jackson, their legitimate prey; so one and all refused to be porters up to the sleeping-place, and actually frightened out of an engagement a Lauterbrunnen man who half offered to come with us. We resolved, therefore, once more to proceed to the Urbachthal and try the mountain thence; and on Monday, after an early dinner, passing through a murmuring throng of guides, we crossed the Sheideck to Rosenlaui, where we slept that night. On our way we met three Lauterbrunnen men; they had heard of us, and guessed who we were; but, although we had crossed their Tschingel pass, they were pleasant enough in their expostulation, and laughingly begged that we would take guides, even if we only paid two or three francs to them. Free trade in peaks and passes is as yet not at all understood; but as the guides are free to make their tariffs as exorbitant as they

like, it is well to explain to them that we too are free to take them or not.

We wished to cross from Rosenlaui direct to the Gauli châlets by the Weitsattel. This is described as a dangerous and difficult pass, so we looked out at Rosenlaui for some one to conduct us to the top. Guides proper were not to be had; but a little man, in a blue smock frock, who was milking cows, was pointed out to us as knowing the way well. He assured us that we could not find our way down the other side without him, and offered to take us the whole way for fifteen francs; but after some discussion, he agreed to take us to the summit for eight francs, and leave us to make the best of our way down on the other side. So we arranged to be called at 4 A.M., if the weather were fine.

When the morning came, we were idle and would not move till six, for the pass is a short one, and our sole object in starting early was to avoid the risk of falling stones. The weather too was doubtful; for, although the sky was deep blue, masses of moist clouds were blowing about the mountains. We found our old friend below, but to-day he was of a brown appearance, and clad in the ordinary woollen suit of a guide. We packed up plenty of provisions for two days, since at Matten, as the Gauli châlets are called, we could get neither bread, meat, nor wine; and, having given to Kohler, our guide, the lion's share to carry, we set off at about eight. Kohler carried an alpenstock and a woodcutter's axe, with a handle evidently new for the occasion, as was also a great patch in his brown

trowsers. All this did not look business-like, but, notwithstanding his very unprofessional appearance, he proved to be a capital guide, and exceedingly active and merry. We quickly mounted to the glaciers, and reached a well-known slope of ice, liable to be swept by falling stones; these, early in the morning, remain frozen to the ice, but we were late, as a sharp rap on the elbow from one soon made me feel. Kohler cut the steps vigorously till he quite lost his breath, when I took my share, but unluckily had my gloves in my knapsack, and before reaching the top of the slope was suffering the most excruciating agony, from the exposure of my frost-bitten fingers—a souvenir of the Jungfrau—to the cold while holding on occasionally to the ice. I had finger-stalls on the worst fingers, but these were of little avail, and I was sharply taught the evils of exposing a frost-bite to cold, for the subsequent pain is much more intense than that which the original injury occasions. As soon as we had passed beyond the range of this stone battery, I unpacked my gloves and drank some wine, for the acute suffering had nearly made me sick.

We had now no more difficulty, and in three hours after leaving the inn reached the summit of the pass, where we dismissed our friend, and, after a glissade down snow slopes, came upon the pastures below, and in three or four hours gained Matten, halting *en route* at a châlet for milk. The weather cleared up in the evening, and when we went to bed the sky was resplendent with stars, which shone tranquilly on the glacier and snow moun-

tains. As usual before a hard day's work, I had no sleep; but we rose soon after midnight, when, to our host's horror, I indulged in a tub; and after breakfast we started, at about two A.M., taking Neiger the shepherd to light us on our way with his lantern, for there was no moon. This saved us a great deal of trouble, as our path lay among boulders of stone, on the north bank of the glacier. The night was lovely, and numerous little tarns reflected the stars, while the hoar-frost on the grass twinkled and glittered as we walked along. The silent morning hours were most enjoyable. About three, we could see sufficiently to dispense with the lantern, and bidding farewell to Neiger walked along by ourselves, watching the magnificent tints which adorned the few clouds in the remote east, and which gradually overspread the sky and tinged, one by one, with the deepest crimson the various peaks of the magnificent snowy amphitheatre in front.

The summit of the Wetterhorn consists of three peaks; and to reach the base of the one which is usually ascended, we found it necessary to cross two passes, and to climb then to the top of a third, which lies between two of the peaks. The peak which we wished to ascend is that very beautiful and sharp snow pyramid, visible from Meiringen and Rosenlaui, which crowns the tremendous precipices immediately above the Sheideck.

From the shepherd's hut we kept along débris, grass, and rocks for some distance, and then mounted the Gauli Glacier to a depression which we took to be our first col. But the Ordnance map is not very accurate here; and after

climbing for some time up slopes which had been concealed from us until we reached them, we found ourselves, about 6 A.M., near a stone man, and on the summit of the Renfenhorn! For some time we had seen our true col below us to the left, but we were separated from it by an impassable precipice of rock. From our position, however, we gained an exceedingly fine view. The Finsteraarhorn and the Schreckhorn rose grandly above the nearer mountains; and, which was more important to us than anything else, we saw clearly the whole of our route to the very summit of the Wetterhorn. The view was immensely invigorating, for we had come very wearily up the last slopes, knowing that we were going out of our way, but hoping for a possibility of descending on the other side. We now sat down to breakfast, but found the wind far too keen to admit of this; so we postponed our meal, packed up again, and began to descend.

We were obliged to cut a few steps on bare ice at first, and then crossed cautiously two *bergschrunds*; their coverings were very thin, but hard frozen, so that they bore us. Now we ran down a snow-slope, and taking a short cut through a small ice-fall, soon reached the depth of the hollow, and climbing a little way up the next slope, halted under its partial shelter for breakfast. We stayed no longer than we could help, and then walked up rather long snow slopes to our second ridge. This we hit at the right point, and, after a little difficulty with *bergschrunds*, for the snow had become softer, we mounted to the third col, which we reached at 9.30 A.M.

Here we stayed for some time breakfasting and resting, for the col afforded us a very good view of Grindelwald and of our old enemies the rocks, which certainly appeared uncommonly bad as viewed from above. But we had made up our minds that, after mounting the peak, we would descend by them to Grindelwald, to see several friends who were interested in the result, and to show ourselves to the guides, who professed to be incredulous as to the possibility of our success.

The wind was still piercing, but we dug a hole in the snow in which to lunch. It was indeed quite necessary to make a good meal, since we did not mean to carry our knapsacks further up the mountain, but buried them in the snow till our return.

After a careful reconnoitre we set off, and climbed up at first by some rocks to the left; we then crossed to a kind of *arête* of snow, up which we cut a long line of steps as far as a patch of rocks, about half-way up the snowy cone. Here we halted for a few minutes, and made a meal of some prunes; and then climbed straight up to the summit. The slope became steeper and steeper, and the snow was in very bad condition. The surface was so hard frozen that I was obliged to cut out every step we took; but the snow was soft below it, so that the effort of springing up from step to step broke through the outer crust, and just when the upper foot was being set on a step the lower one would sink through, and a fresh effort had to be made. This condition of the snow more than doubled our labours; but all things come to an end,

and at last there remained only the well-known final difficulty—an overhanging cornice of snow and ice—just below which the slope attained to a vertical angle and was bare ice. Happily for us, the cleft which Mr. Foster's guides had made a fortnight before in the cornice still existed to some extent, and we only improved it a little. Matthews, who had kept the rope taut below me all the way up, now came higher, so as to give me rope, and then anchored himself, in case I slipped; this done, I cut the few remaining steps, and climbed up until I could stretch an arm over the summit, which is only a knife-edge, when a good push of the axe with one hand and a pull with the other brought me up through the notch, and I sat astride on the summit! Then, standing up, I made way for Matthews, who quickly followed; and our work was done—we stood on the summit!

It *was* glorious. The sky was cloudless. The view seemed endless. And the perseverance of days was crowned with success.

The summit is a very limited space; much like that of the Jungfrau, but not quite so narrow. We carried off as a trophy the top of a small fir-tree, which Christian Almer, I believe, planted there for a flag staff on his first ascent; and then the wind compelled us to retreat.

It is rather a difficult question, when there are only two, whether the more experienced should precede or follow in a descent; on this occasion I thought it better to go first, for, though by this means I could not have saved Matthews from slipping, yet, as we were to go down

backwards, I could help him in putting his feet in the steps. I must take this opportunity of stating that our risks on the final peak must have been exceedingly great, but for the entire self-control of my companion in positions wholly new to him—for this was his first summer in the Alps—and I was saved all anxiety in looking after him by the implicit obedience with which he treated every hint I gave, a matter really of the greatest consequence when beginners venture without guides in the company of more experienced mountaineers.

We descended the peak with perfect safety, going backwards, as if down a ladder, to the central patch of rocks, and, after leaving a card in the travellers' bottle there, we descended without difficulty to our knapsacks. It was about midday when we reached the summit of the peak, and not earlier than two or three when we once more reached the col, and, after a short halt, began our descent towards Grindelwald; we took at first to one of the many rock *couloirs* which here furrow the mountain, but soon found ourselves in such great difficulties that we were forced to remount to the col and seek for a better way. We chose next a narrower one, partly filled with snow. Down this I made steps, for it was hard and greasy, in consequence of being used to some extent as a path by falling stones. Most unfortunately, as we were descending, Matthews, for some reason, although I had made large steps, slipped out of them, fell upon me, knocked me down, and we both began falling together. The shock of the fall knocked his staff out of his hand, and, like a drowning man, he

clutched at me; but I shook him off at once, and, before he had slid to the end of his tether, I had turned face downwards and driven my axe-spike into the snow. This kept us both up, and, while I held fast, he scrambled on to his feet and reached the rocks; when he had good holding, I too stood up and rejoined him. This fall was most unfortunate; it made me nervous, especially as there was no particular reason for it, and our progress consequently became very slow. We kept to the rocks, which were steep and *very* rotten; added to which, stones fell occasionally from above.

I had included a candle among the stores packed up at Rosenlaui, and we still had plenty of food; so that we could have slept under a good rock anywhere, although it was too cold to make one wish for such accommodation. There seemed, however, great likelihood of our using the candle, for it was now becoming late, and we had not yet reached our old track up from Grindelwald, nor among the many parallel ridges was there much chance of soon finding it. All hope of arriving at Grindelwald that night was gone, and it became a question whether we could get so far even as the Gleckstein.

We sat down after a time and had some food, and then we agreed to pray together for strength and ability. After this we proceeded, greatly refreshed. All nervousness vanished, and I led the way up to a ridge from which, to our inexpressible relief, we saw our old course on the rocks. We *were* glad. For now we knew the way perfectly, and there only remained the labour of the descent.

When we left the rocks, we found that two awkward *bergschrunds* had opened since our previous visit; we were obliged to pass between them, and this involved the cutting of a good many steps in the snow, which was here hard frozen. In truth, the sun had set some time before, and it was becoming quite dark. We crossed the snow slope safely, and then kept tumbling about on the débris below. But we resolved to try and find the Gleckstein; and when we thought we must be nearing it, we gave a few shouts, and, to our joy, a light was shown. This directed us to the cave, which we reached at 11 P.M.

We found that the party there consisted of a Bernese gentleman, with a couple of guides, one of whom had been among the most sullen at Grindelwald previously to our ascent. But he was very civil now, which was well for us, as both his companions were gone to bed. He gave us some fuel, with which to cook our chocolate, and some water, and then turned in himself, good naturedly lending a rug for our coverlet. After supper we enjoyed the sight of the stars for a little time, as we mused on our adventures and talked over the day; until excitement beginning to change into drowsiness, we crept into the cave to bed. This is a space between two great lumps of rock, which have fallen together. One end of the chamber thus formed is built up, and through the other we had to crawl, for no amount of stooping will admit one, nor is it possible, when inside, to stand up. There was a considerable draught of air through the place, and after half an hour's sleep the cold woke me up, and I remained awake till our fellow-

occupants rose for breakfast, and bequeathed to us their rugs. Even then Matthews was very cold and moved my compassion so far that I got up ere long and started.

The Swiss gentleman and his guides were to ascend the Wetterhorn themselves. He was very agreeable and sociable, but had as yet never been up a high mountain. He admired the English immensely, and had a belt and alpenstock made after our type, though he had, indeed, left them at the hotel, not knowing exactly what to do with them. No wonder that he rather envied us, for he had agreed to pay each of his guides sixty francs, besides their provisions. It was well for us that they went up and saw our tracks, so that the guides might be assured that we really had ascended the mountain.

We had no difficulty in descending to Grindelwald, and, on the way, refreshed ourselves at the first châlet we reached with eggs beaten up in hot milk. Every guide we met on the Sheideck route enquired whether we had been successful, and most—being mere valley guides, and jealous of their superiors—were very glad to hear our news. The landlord of the 'Adler' saluted us warmly; and after hot baths we went to bed for three or four hours, and were called, greatly refreshed, in time for *table d'hôte*. And so happily ended by far the most difficult ascent I have ever attempted without guides.

*** Each guide for the Wetterhorn, 60 francs; two, at least, generally taken.

CHAPTER VI.

[1867 *continued.*]

A HIGH-LEVEL ROUTE FROM THE ENGADINE TO GRINDELWALD.

> Invia Pieridum perago loca, nullius ante
> Trita solo.—*Lucretius.*

I.—THE SURSURA JOCH.

AFTER our descent from the Wetterhorn the weather changed, and Matthews and I, after travelling together to Hospenthal, parted company—he bound for Zermatt, while I walked over the St. Gotthard, the San Jorio, and the Maloja passes to Pontresina. Here I met by appointment an old mountaineering friend, Mr. Utterson Kelso, and was just in time, for he had arranged to try the Piz Bernina next day, Hans Grass—a capital fellow—having promised to act as his sole guide. Hans somewhat unwillingly consented to the addition of myself to his select party of one. However, Mr. Kelso's earnest entreaty ultimately softened him. I found three other old friends at Pontresina—Mr. Hutchinson of Rugby with Mr. Hudson and their guide Franz Andermatten, and Mr. Trueman.

With the two former gentlemen I had on previous

occasions made expeditions, and they did not require much persuasion to attack the Bernina with us, taking Franz as their guide. Mr. Trueman protested that he was too old, but his vigorous aspect belied him, and he also eventually fell in with our plans, and engaged Fleuri as his guide. So next day we all went to Boval, and the following morning safely ascended the formidable piz.

Mr. Trueman, I saw at once, was exceedingly steady in difficulties. So I asked him, as Kelso was compelled suddenly to return to Geneva, to try with me a little mountaineering without guides. To this he very readily assented, and accordingly, on Wednesday, August 14, we drove down to Zernetz, with a view to trying to effect a new pass to Davos am Platz, the possibility of which had been suggested in Mr. Ball's guide book.

On Thursday we started in high spirits, at 3.30 A.M., by moonlight. Descending the high road for half an hour, we then turned off to the left into a wild valley—the Sursura Thal. In this the track was fair enough at first, but soon dwindled away in a kind of bog. The morning was clear and frosty, and the valley looked wild and beautiful. After a certain amount of forcing the way through thickets and undergrowth, we emerged upon a path again on more open ground, and soon saw the châlets of Sursura, which we reached at 5.15. Our pace was necessarily moderate, for Mr. Trueman was fifty-seven years old, but he carried his own knapsack invariably, and took his full share of work in all respects. At the châlets we obtained some milk, and then, by the advice of the shepherds,

climbed up to the right, leaving the main valley, until, after winding round a hill, marked 2894 on the Ordnance map, we reached the ice at 7 A.M. Probably the glacier at its main exit may present some difficulty, to account for the shepherds' advice; at any rate, there was none where we took to it.

We now roped, for the ice was snow-covered almost to this spot, and we had a pleasant walk up to the col, which we reached at 8.15. We felt some hesitation in settling where to cross the ridge until we were pretty high up; but eventually we selected a place close under the peak 3109, where, however, débris, and not snow (as shown on the map), formed the boundary of the glacier. Here we erected a stone man, and left a bottle with our names in it, after breakfast; and at 9.30 set off diagonally across the Grialetsch glacier for three little lakes which are marked on the map, and which we saw before quitting the ice. We had no difficulty on this glacier, though, in consequence of the number of crevasses, the rope was very useful; and we reached the little inn of Dürrenboden at 11.15 A.M. with the feeling that our new pass was rather too short for our ambition, although the beauty of its scenery and its ease ought to make it a favourite route. We reached Davos at about 2 P.M. Here we dined, and afterwards, leaving Trueman to remain till next day and then drive down the Praetigau to Landquart, I set off for Chur, over the Strela Pass, in order to pick up a sheet of the Ordnance map containing the Glarus district, which neither of us possessed. But I lingered too long at Davos,

and then lost my way before reaching the summit of the pass among the horrible *tobels* of the neighbourhood. These are great ravines of hard gravel or some similar substance, most difficult or often quite impossible to cross, and are the bane of that part of Switzerland. The Strela abounds in such 'furchtbare tobel.'

Eventually I reached the summit in safety, at 6 P.M., and a rough up-and-down path brought me thence to Peist at 8.30, where I spent the night, and partook as far as I could of the wretched food afforded by the place. Happily, I had in my knapsack some of our provisions from Zernetz, including bread and apple jelly, and thus was saved from the antiquated rolls of Peist.

Next morning I went down to Chur, got the map, and took train to Ragaz, Trueman joining me at Landquart. Hence we had meant to proceed to Vättis that evening, with the view of crossing the Sardona Glacier to Stachelberg on Saturday. But the weather became very bad, and I was out of sorts, and between the two we gave that up, and, sleeping at Ragaz, next day went to Stachelberg *viâ* Glarus.

THE CLARIDEN GRAT.

These peaks are nearer heaven than earth below.

. . . . . .

'Tis the blue floor of heaven that they upbear;
And, like some old and wildly rugged stair,
They lift us to the land where all is fair,
The land of which I dream.—*Bonar.*

We spent Sunday at Stachelberg, and in the evening walked on to the Pantenbrücke Hotel, about an hour higher up the valley. The weather had brightened up again, and we determined to try the Clariden Grat next day. This is a very long and fine pass, of which a rather appalling description is given in the guide-books. So we determined to start at 1 A.M., which we did, in the light of a brilliant moon. We took a man to carry our knapsacks up to the highest châlet, at the Ober Sand Alp, and this saved us a good deal of fatigue, for it is a very stiff pull up to that point.

Our porter was useful to us in more ways than one, for he carried a lantern, which saved a great deal of time in the deep shadow of a narrow gorge, through which our path lay for some distance, and from which every ray of moonlight was excluded, save those reflected from the glistering rocks above.

We reached the Sand Alp at 4.45, and halted there for breakfast. A couple of German gentlemen, who had slept there, were just setting off when we arrived; they also meant to try the Clariden Grat. So we made our halt a

brief one, for we wished to overtake and pass them, so as not to seem to make use of their track. We had determined, as suggested in the 'Alpine Guide,' to try the pass by way of the Sand firn* instead of the Clariden firn, and this attempt proved to be successful, and no doubt saved us trouble. We parted from our porter after breakfast, and shouldering our knapsacks started on again at 5.15. The day was brilliant, and the scenery throughout of the very highest order; indeed, the descent of the Hufi glacier afforded us an uninterrupted succession of bold outlines of the peaks in its immediate neighbourhood, while the background was formed by the whole extent of the Bernese Oberland, my lately acquired friend the Wetterhorn being conspicuous in beauty among its fellows.

We soon overtook the party in front, to the intense indignation of their guides at our venturing without such aid to pass on before. But they shortly mounted to the left, so as to look over from the Sand Grat to the Vorder Rhein Thal on their way, while we kept straight on. At eight we reached the summit of our pass, as we thought, and sat down to breakfast and enjoyed the view. But the local knowledge of the guides was too much for us in the end, for we found, on rising to continue our journey, that the descent immediately below us was too steep to be pleasant; so we turned along the ridge to our right in search of a better way, and soon saw that we had made a mistake, and had come to a point considerably higher than the Col. Meanwhile our German friends had out-

* In the east of Switzerland, a Glacier or Gletscher is termed a Firn.

witted us, and were already over it, though hidden from us in the hollow below. We lost more time, in cutting steps down a rather steep slope of ice, while our rivals hurried down the glacier beyond; but once on the more level part where snow lay we lost no time, and, thanks to our predecessors, threaded without delay the maze of crevasses on the lower end of the Hufi glacier, and at about 10.30 A.M. finally quitted the ice close to the little Hufi châlet, where we halted to enjoy the magnificent view, having ensured plenty of time for our walk to Amsteg. Later on we descended the Maderaner Thal, the lower part of which is somewhat wearisome, and reached Amsteg in time for dinner, where we were joined by our German friends, whom we had passed in the valley.

*** Charge for the Clariden Grat, 30 francs per guide (Ball). Much more is constantly asked.

THE STEINLIMMI AND TRIFT GLETSCHER JOCH.

Walk with the Beautiful and with the Grand,
Let nothing on the earth thy feet deter;
Sorrow may lead thee weeping by the hand,
But give not all thy bosom thoughts to her.
Walk with the Beautiful!—*E. H. Burrington.*

ON Tuesday we drove up the St. Gothard road to Wasen, and then took the Susten Pass to the little inn of the Stein Alp, where we slept, so as to cross next day to the Grimsel. Our hostess, as usual in such cases, assured

us that it was quite out of the question to attempt to make the expedition alone. However, she was very friendly, and prepared a bottle of spiced wine for us, and we started at 1.30 A.M. in brilliant moonlight. There was no difficulty in finding the way, for we took to the ice almost immediately, as the glacier extends close down to the house. The scene was most fairy-like, with the glaciers and peaks all glistening in the bright light. Truly, to know Switzerland aright,

Go visit it by the pale moonlight.

We reached the summit of our first pass—the Steinlimmi —before sunrise, though not before the yellow and green lights of approaching dawn were tinging the sky above the dark mountain tops. It was 4.5 A.M. when we first stood on the Limmi, and we stayed there for a quarter of an hour, enjoying the magnificent view on either hand. The descent lay at first down *débris*, and then on a small glacier from which a short but rough scramble led us to the Trift glacier, before reaching which we halted for breakfast. My companion, on whom the indifferent food of the Engadine and of the last few days had been telling, was very unwell here, and I almost thought of descending to Gadmen, a village not very far off. But he would not give up on any account, and assured me that he felt all the better for his sickness—a malady to which many mountaineers are liable—so we proceeded slowly up the Trift glacier, and soon reached the base of the higher ice-fall where the rocks at the side are usually scaled.

After reconnoitring with glasses we saw a kind of track up them for which we made. It was on quitting the ice at this spot that the nearly fatal accident befel us which I have fully narrated in Chapter I. On recovering our footing in the chasm we found that we had sustained no serious injuries, and at once set to work to escape from our dungeon. The rock below the ice was happily not worn entirely smooth, and with a little extra care we climbed up to the level of the glacier, and soon reached the track, which led us up to a hut newly erected by the Swiss Alpine Club. Here we found a stove, cooking utensils, and crockery. So while Trueman, whose leg was very painful, rested on some hay, I set to work and collected wood which lay about as débris from the building of the hut. A fire was soon lighted, and while it burnt up I filled a saucepan with snow, and setting it on, prepared chocolate and beat up eggs which we had brought, until the boiling water began to sing, when in went the chocolate, then the eggs, which served as cream, and by the time all was ready Trueman was thoroughly rested, and we sat down together with glad hearts to our capital meal. My companion's appetite, as I can testify, was greatly improved by our tumble, for he made no further difficulty now about eating or drinking, and when the chocolate was finished we made soup with some of Liebig's extract which he prudently carried, to warm ourselves before starting. Whatever critics may say, I should be ungrateful if I were not to add that, as we sat in front of the châlet, invigorated by our meal and surrounded by such

magnificent scenery, and read, according to our daily custom, a chapter of the Bible together, it was with a delight and a thankfulness for our renewed lives which words cannot express.

We had reached the hut about nine, and a little before eleven we roped and set off again, taking to the ice at once. The glacier was snow-covered, and it was toilsome work mounting the last long slopes in soft snow to the summit of the Joch.

But we were obliged to walk as fast as we could, for the sky became threatening and flakes of snow fell before we reached, at 1.10, the summit. We halted here five minutes, and then rapidly descended the snow slopes towards the Rhone valley. At three we quitted the ice, helped by some tracks on this side. We now had a laborious scramble up and down rocks, and great difficulty in finding our way. The clouds hung low, and we could only judge of our general direction by the compass; but after a time we suddenly gained a view of the Grimsel and its little black lake, though how to descend to it down the slippery rocks was by no means clear; the clouds, moreover, soon completely enveloped us, but by bearing to the left we evaded the difficulties in which Professor Tyndall found himself some years before at the same spot, and at 6.30 P.M. reached the hotel in safety, though in a thunderstorm. We found that dinner was imminent, and we did justice to it.

THE STRAHLECK.

Persevere still in that clear way.—*Shakspeare.*

THE next morning was very wet, but about mid-day there was a partial clearance in the sky and we decided to advance in the afternoon to the Pavillion—a little hut above the lower Aar glacier—and spend the night there. So we made an early dinner, and engaged a porter to carry blankets and provisions to the hut, providing, in place of the bad bread which had been trying my companion's strength, a most excellent cake, which our friend the cook made at our special request.

We had both crossed the Strahleck previously, but it is a pass which, from its beauty, and from the interesting nature of the climb in parts, well bears repetition, and by this route we hoped to cross on the next day—Friday—to Grindelwald.

As we were leaving the hotel, one of those pleasant *rencontres* which often occur in the Alps took place between ourselves and a party just arriving, one of whom had formerly been a tutor of mine, and afterwards a walking companion for a week. Our chat concluded, we pressed on, for a shower was threatening, and before we reached the Pavillion the rain was steadily pouring; no pleasant prospect for the morrow, nor, indeed, agreeable for the present. My waterproof, which I always carry, protected me almost entirely, but Trueman was quite wet through; and, to add to our discomforts, the fire smoked

at first; but the chinks in the roof, added to a good shaking which we gave to the chimney, soon mended this.

The hut we found in a bad state of repair, and very different to what it was when I slept there before. The roof let in a good deal of rain; but, perhaps worse, some wretch had carried off every cup, plate, knife, and spoon from the place, so that we had to eat and drink as best we could.

Soon after our arrival three men appeared. They turned out to be guides employed by Mr. Dolphus Ausset, the owner of the hut, to collect crystals for him, for which purpose they were spending two or three days there. They all knew me as the climber of the Wetterhorn, and made us as comfortable as they could. We had a capital brew of chocolate for supper and for breakfast, having brought a bottle of cream and some raw eggs with that view; and there was plenty of good hay to sleep upon. But when we rose at one o'clock to look at the weather, it was thoroughly bad, so we went to sleep again. At six, however, it was fine enough to start. The three Blätters—Meiringen men—tried hard to persuade us to take one of them at least to the summit of the pass; but of course in vain. Indeed I was rather especially pleased at the idea of closing my year's excursion with a raid upon Grindelwald without guides; so, bidding farewell to our friends, we trudged off along the Unteraar glacier. The day soon became quite fine, and we enjoyed the splendid scenery thoroughly. After three hours we halted for breakfast a little below the base of the celebrated ice-wall.

Now began the business of the day.

The bergschrund which we were to cross, instead of being bridged over with snow, as they had told us at the Grimsel it would be, was yawning all across our road—open throughout its length. We selected the narrowest part, guided by an old track on the snow, but on reaching the edge saw that matters had changed a good deal since our predecessors had passed. We stood on the brink of a really awful abyss; the snow was loose and treacherous after the bad weather, and we had to jump up hill. So we took every precaution. Trueman firmly anchored himself on the lower edge, by his axe, and when I had—not without hesitation—sprung over, I went to the full tether of the rope and anchored myself in turn while Trueman took the leap. We were still very insecure, on a steep bank of rather deep loose snow resting on ice, in which the bergschrund was spreading in long cracks, so we crawled one at a time, on hands and knees, until we had fairly cleared the schrund and its branches. We could not, however, now proceed up the snow as is usually done, for it was in a very dangerous state, and falling at one side in spontaneous avalanches; so we took to the rocks in the centre, and after a little scrambling at first, found them quite easy, and before twelve we sat on the summit of the pass. After an hour's halt of intense enjoyment, we descended towards Grindelwald. Before reaching the rocks we had to cut a good many steps in consequence of lack of snow on the steep part of the ice. The crevasses too were very bad. But with this exception we had no difficulty in

making our way down the well-known course to the Eismeer. Egger and Michel, who were with a party of ladies there, hailed me, I must own, in no sullen manner, but right heartily, notwithstanding my escapade of thus crossing the Strahleck under their very noses; and at the châlet inn of the Bärenegg, on quitting the ice, we found quite a bevy of guides whom the fine afternoon saw in attendance upon visitors to the Eismeer. Great was their merriment at my tattered coat, the elbow and one of the tails of which I had been compelled to leave as hostages to the Trift glacier. But we did not stay there long, and pushing on, reached Grindelwald before six, where my old friend the landlord of the Adler gave us a hearty welcome, and ushered me in one of his own best coats to table d'hôte at seven.

Our work was done for that year. The weather lasted out just long enough for us, and next morning my regrets on quitting the mountains were softened by the steady down-pour of rain which accompanied us to Interlaken, whence I returned to England.

CHAPTER VII.

[1869.]

THE COL DU TOUR—MONT BLANC—COL DU MONT TONDU—THE ADLER—THE ALPHUBEL—THE COL D'HERENS.

> My joy was in the wilderness,—to breathe
> The difficult air of the iced mountain's top;
> Where the birds dare not build nor insect wing
> Flit o'er the herbless granite. . . .
>
> *Byron.*

THE COL DU TOUR.

IN 1869 I left England on Monday, July 26, and reached Martigny soon after 4 P.M. on the following Wednesday, in company with Canon Payne Smith, the Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. The weather was so fine that we resolved not to waste a single day, so we walked on the same evening to Orsières, on the St. Bernard road, hoping to cross the Col du Tour next day. I had forgotten to bring out the light-coloured flannel coat which usually decorates my person in the Alps, and at Martigny, in default of anything better, I picked up a blouse. This was very comfortable in the valleys, and during warm weather on the mountains; but frequently proved a very insufficient covering, even when aided by a warm woollen spencer such as is sold at Chamouny.

It was soon after 8 P.M. when we reached Orsières, and from the hotel they professed to show us the summit of the Col du Tour, but, as usual, we found great incredulity as to the possibility of crossing it without guides. Soon after dinner we turned in for the night; we were rather anxious as to the weather, for a thunderstorm had come on; but we engaged, after much pressure on his part, a young fellow to carry our knapsacks for an hour or so, that we might lighten our first day's walking a little.

Next morning we were called at three, and set off soon after four. Our porter had probably repented of his bargain, for he did not appear, so we shouldered our knapsacks at once. They were as light as we could make them, for we had sent all our superfluous goods in our black bags from Lausanne to Chamouny; but a bottle of wine and half a bottle of tea, with solid provisions in addition, told upon our untrained shoulders considerably. Heavy clouds were blowing across the sky, and the weather looked very doubtful when we started.

We had very little difficulty in finding our way up the Val d'Orny, but our pace was slow. The Professor had unfortunately been unable to take any preliminary walks in England owing to pressing occupations, and after walking for an hour or two, he urged me to go forward and leave him to follow slowly. The weather was very uncertain, so I pressed on, wishing to gain a view of the glacier and Col if possible during some break in the clouds which covered most of the higher summits. The track—as marked correctly on the Ordnance map—crosses to the

right bank of the Orny torrent, and soon afterwards bifurcates. Here unfortunately the map deceived my companion into recrossing, while I kept along the much better path to the left; and after resting for nearly an hour on the summit of a steep slope waiting for him, at length went in search, and after a long climbing up and down, discovered and reached him. (I used Mr. Reilly's map, and found it most accurate and useful throughout the day.) It was clearly imprudent for him to attempt to cross the pass, as his strength was not at all equal to it, while I, having to some extent trained in England, was unwilling to be beaten. So we parted, agreeing that he should come round by Martigny, while I tried to cross the pass alone.

I now climbed up again to my old position where I had deposited my knapsack and coat, and pushed on more briskly, expecting every moment to see the ice; but there were two more steep climbs, with small plateaux between, before a glimpse could be gained of the glacier beyond.

At length, near a tiny ruined chapel close to a little lake at the edge of the glacier, I lay down, wearied out, and debated the problem of proceeding or returning. The soothing influences of a pipe inclined me to stay in the chapel for the night, and to make a fire of the large wooden cross outside and bits of wood lying about; but the very cold wind was an argument against the likelihood of a comfortable night, and I resolved to aid my meditations by a bath. Icebergs were floating in the little lake, but the plunge was taken; and, greatly braced up by the

cold, I afterwards made a hearty dinner, and resolved to proceed. Unluckily, I had only the half bottle of tea with me, for the wine was in my companion's knapsack, and I had lost my brandy flask, so that I was obliged to drink very abstemiously.

I kept along the moraine now for some distance, and then took to the ice, which was covered with snow very nearly down to the point where I first stepped on to it, so that I proceeded very cautiously for fear of concealed crevasses, thrusting vigorously my axe from time to time through the snow to ascertain that there was solid ice or snow below. There were no tracks left by previous parties; but when about half-way up the glacier I came, to my delight, upon a bottle—a sufficient proof that I was taking the right direction. A guide must have filled it with snow on leaving it, as they often do, and I gained in consequence a most delicious draught of water. The wind had now increased to a gale, and it began to snow before I reached the first of the two ridges which must be crossed on this pass. Happily, the vehemence of the wind prevented occasional mist from remaining for any length of time, and every few minutes I gained views of my route and of the commencement of the great ice-fall of the Trient glacier, which now fell off to the right.

Between the two ridges there is a considerable glacier basin, which I crossed, and near the unmistakable Aiguille du Tour are two depressions close to one another, in the rocky ridge running south from it. I felt very uncertain which was my pass, and kept up a snowy buttress between

the two, until as I drew near I had the satisfaction of seeing a stone man on the one to the left, and traces in the deep snow immediately below it. These were soon reached, and after crossing a rather awkward bergschrund I crept under some rocks on the summit, scarcely able to stand in the hurricane which was now raging. I sat down in the shelter of the rocks and made a hasty meal, for the cold was intense, and it was already past 4 P.M. Then I put on every wrap I had in my knapsack, and jamming my straw hat as tightly on my head as possible, prepared to battle with the wind during a descent of the rocks on the other side. These I expected to be steep and rather difficult, from what I had heard, and I had not yet actually stood on the ridge and looked over. But on trial they only lasted five minutes, and were quite easy; in fact there was no necessity to use the hands on them at all, to my great relief, and I walked down the snow beyond without difficulty, until I reached the top of a great rounded boss or shoulder, falling away rather steeply in front, and hemmed in with crevasses below.

It appeared to be the easiest course to keep straight down and then bear a little to the left. This I did, and a few steps on an ice slope at the bottom landed me on a bridge of the same material, leading into the ice-fall. I encountered here no great difficulties, though the chasms looked rather formidable from above; but it was necessary occasionally to go on hands and knees over the weaker snow bridges. Three-quarters of an hour saw me through the entanglement, and soon afterwards I reached

the moraine to the right, and quitted the ice just above the final great ice-fall of the Tour glacier, which presents so imposing an appearance from Argentiere and the Col du Balme. A rapid descent down a snow slope, which happily covered the rough stones, brought me in sight of a goat's track leading towards the inn on the Col du Balme; and as I preferred the high air there to the greater luxury of Argentière, I took to it, but soon repented of my choice. The path, which I had hoped would wind on a level round the shoulder of the hill, mounted up and up, and my weary limbs nearly succumbed. I had nothing to drink, and was too tired to care to eat. I halted from time to time to rest, not without enjoying the sunset effects on Mont Blanc, the summit of which rose proudly in repose among the stormy clouds whirling around. But the failing light warned me not to linger, and goaded on thus I at length reached the highest level of the path, and saw the hotel in the distance, and at last reached the summit of the Col and the welcome attentions of a willing host. Hot milk and kirschwasser formed my whole supper, and, together with a good night, completely restored the vigour which had certainly been rather overtasked in crossing entirely alone, as my first day's walk, the Col du Tour.

MONT BLANC.

I saw a great white throne.—*Revelation of St. John.*

After crossing the Tour, I enjoyed a day of idleness, and only descended to Chamouny, where my companion joined me in the evening. We had planned an ascent of Mont Blanc together, but it was necessary to get into good condition first, so on Saturday we made a little glacier expedition; and I strongly commend to every one the course which, by the advice of Mr. Reilly, who happened to be at Chamouny, I followed over the Glacier des Grand Montets, by a route marked on his map.

There were violent thunderstorms on Saturday and Sunday evenings, and pouring rain all Monday, accompanied by a heavy fall of snow on the heights; but we went out for a little practice in step-cutting up the foot of the Glacier des Bossons. On Tuesday the sun was shining brightly in at my window when I awoke; and before I had finished dressing, M. A. Payot, one of the Chamouny guides and an old friend of mine, came up to tell me that two American gentlemen, Messrs. Winthrop and Weeks, meant to go up to the Grands Mulets that day in hopes of ascending Mont Blanc on Wednesday.

I had met these gentlemen on the Col du Balme, and they had informed me of their intention, and asked about guides. They had not had sufficient experience to wish to try the mountain with us alone; but we agréed, if pos-

sible, to make the ascent on the same day. So they had kindly sent Payot to let us know that they were off. The Canon and I started an hour or so after they did, and in leisurely fashion mounted to the Pierre Pointue, where we found them just setting off after a meal. We followed their example and dined, and soon afterwards continued our course to the Grands Mulets. Thanks to them, steps were cut where necessary, and a track was formed, and at about 5 P.M. we reached the very comfortable châlet which has now been built there.

Our American friends turned in early, and after our dinner their guides began to attack us about trying the mountain alone. It was quite clear that there would be very heavy work next day in the new snow, which would be still further increased by the fact of the *corridor* being rendered impracticable by a large crevasse, which necessitated a détour over the shoulder of Mont Maudit; and the guides naturally enough protested against doing this work for us. We immediately offered a handsome tip to them, which brought out a profusion of assurances that they did not want money. We also undertook to share the toils of going first in the deep snow, and of step-cutting on the *Mur*. But they were still dissatisfied, and were eager that we should all go on one rope as one party, to which I firmly refused my assent. And this for a double reason. I had long wished to try the mountain without help, for, though I had never been up it, I felt sure it was easy; and, from the frequent halts which he had been compelled to make in the ascent so far, my companion felt that he

was still in very insufficient training, and that we should only be a drag upon the American gentlemen.

Accordingly, as we were firm, they were all rather disposed to be sulky, for their great object was to prevent our being able to say that we had gone up without guides.

Next morning we were called at two, and after breakfast started off—the two Americans with three guides and two porters on one rope, and we two on another. It was a bright starlight night, and a gloriously tinted dawn succeeded. Not a cloud was to be seen, but a thin mist curling just on the summit of Mont Blanc softened its sharp line, and melted gently into the deep violet of the sky around. The Professor walked up the snow slopes most pluckily; but gradually his years and lack of training told upon him, and we had to halt frequently, while the party in front crept away from us. The last steep slope leading up to the *Grand Plateau* proved very severe, and my friend, finding the fatigue too great for him, was forced to abandon all hope of advancing further.

Accordingly, I shouted to the party ahead, who were strong enough in guides I knew, to ask if they could spare a porter to accompany the Canon back to the *Grands Mulets*, there to await me while I went on to the summit and returned. There was no answer for a long time, and fearing that there might be a misapprehension, I shouted that of course we would pay him exactly as if he had been taken to the summit. But still there was continued deliberation, until at length they shouted that if I would join their rope and take the porter's place, he should be spared.

The guides had me now at their mercy, and used their advantage. I could not leave my friend to return alone, and wished to enjoy the walk to the summit, and so consented; and, to the joy of the guide, Mont Blanc is not a name which I can add to my own list of peaks and passes proved to be practicable without guides. Happily, however, this task had been previously accomplished by others.* Nevertheless, I had a most enjoyable day on the mountain, except for the bitter cold wind, which nearly nipped my hands, and actually did leave the toes of one of my friends frost-bitten.

We gained a sunny place of shelter on the summit, and here the large cortége of my friends enabled them to draw upon a much better stocked larder than I possessed, and their kind hospitality found a grateful and willing guest. They were both members of the Oxford of America—Yale College,—and proved most active mountaineers. Nothing particularly noticeable occurred during the descent; and, rejoined by the Professor at the Pierre Pointue, we reached Chamouny that evening after a most glorious day.

*** Charge of each guide for Mont Blanc 100 frs. At least two, as a rule, are taken.

* The mountain had at least twice previously been ascended without guides.

THE COL DU MONT TONDU.

Then turn to-night and freely share
Whate'er my hut bestows.—*Goldsmith.*

On Thursday evening we walked down to Les Ouches, and slept there at a primitive but very comfortable little inn, which presented a pleasant contrast to the artificial air of Chamouny, with its luxury and fashion.

At five next morning we left for Contamines, where we dined. In the afternoon we went on to the Pavillion de Trelatête. The climb up takes about two hours, and is well repaid by the fine scenery. The Pavillion itself is a single rough-looking châlet, and when we arrived, as no one answered to our shouts, we feared it was deserted for the rest of the year. All the doors were locked, and the shutters outside the windows were closed, with one exception. This window, which was some height above the ground, was open. So, as there was a cold wind and we were very hot, I reached up to it with the blade of my axe, and by its means soon scrambled in and unbarred the door. An exploration of the premises revealed the most delicious looking pans of cream-coated milk, and other good things, so it was clear that we should have company before long; and indeed the barking of a dog very soon announced the arrival of the tenants of the building in the persons of a most vigorous and well tanned old woman of about fifty summers, with a little lad of eight or nine, a few cows, some pigs, and a pet

lamb. They had all been for a walk to the pastures below, and were now returning at the usual hour of milking.

The Amazon was a most cheerful old body; she was rather surprised to find her premises thus invaded in her absence, but by no means cross, and immediately lit a fire and put on the kettle. We then dismissed her to milk, while we made tea as a preliminary measure, and then reduced to powder some chocolate we had brought with us, which cooked in her new milk, and added to her capital eggs and bread and butter, served to form a grand supper.

It was a very cold evening, and mist was blowing about. But occasionally the glacier appeared, looking like a mountain of ice quite close to the châlet. The Amazon promised us good weather for the next day, and since the Mont Tondu—or as it is there named, the Trelatête Pass—is described in Mr. Ball's guide as offering quite a short journey to Courmayeur, we resolved not to be called till 4.30. My mattress was rather on an incline sideways, which involved dreams of a good deal of mountaineering on awkward slopes, as I rolled downwards occasionally; and this together with the miscellaneous sounds proceeding from cows, pigs, fowls, and the one pet lamb, which were all sleeping in the room below, rather troubled my slumbers; so I was not loath to get up and dress when we were called.

There was no meat to be had; but some 'Liebig's extract' which we had brought furnished a capital basin

of soup, and we set off at six, well furnished in the inner man for our expedition.

We walked along the side of the glacier for about half an hour, and then took to the ice. The Glacier de Trelatête is a very fine one; and as the clouds were gradually dispelled by the sun, peak after peak appeared, with a peculiar brilliance in the clear liquid blue of the sky. The ice was uncommonly slippery after the heavy rains which had fallen on Thursday night, and our progress was consequently very slow. We had some little difficulty in deciding over which of the lateral glaciers our course was to lie, and some time was thus lost; for Mr. Reilly's map on which we were depending proved rather inaccurate here. However we chose, as it turned out, the right one, and quitted the main glacier stream by climbing up an ice slope in parts covered with snow. This was rather exposed to falling stones and ice, and by keeping too much to the right we found ourselves among some rather fine séracs.

Approaching as we did quite closely to these pinnacles of ice, they struck my companion especially with great admiration, not merely at their vast size, but also at the fantastic forms which they had assumed under the influence of the weather. But there was some danger in remaining near them, and we therefore threaded our way in silence, and with such speed as was possible, and at last escaping safely through we came in sight of a stone man on the summit of the pass, a point which we reached in twenty minutes more.

Thoroughly hungry—for we had not made a real halt since starting, and had cut a good many steps below the séracs—we now sat down and dined, and enjoyed the views; but the clouds had risen again, so we did not stop for more than an hour, and then descended by steep but easy rocks to the glacier below, on the Italian side. Down this we hurried, and leaving it on the right bank, glissaded by a snow slope almost on to the very horns of a drove of cattle feeding on the highest pastures, which at that critical moment were being milked. Deep and long were our potations, and thus greatly refreshed we descended to some châlets above Motet. We had already seen from the summit of our pass the steep zigzags by which we were to climb up the Col de la Seigne, and now at the feet of them the Professor, who had accomplished most successfully this his first glacier pass without guides, wisely determined to engage a mule, and follow in a leisurely way, while I walked on to Courmayeur by the rather long and fatiguing track which remained.

It was 8 P.M. before I reached Courmayeur, and my companion arrived soon afterwards.

The pass is certainly a very pretty one, and very easy to be taken without guides; but it appears to me to be rather a longer and more fatiguing walk than is represented in the guide-book usually consulted by English mountaineers.

THE ADLER PASS.

Tenuis quo semita ducit
Angustæque ferunt fauces, aditusque maligni.—*Virgil.*

We reached Zermatt on Thursday the 12th, by the St. Theodule Pass, resolved to devote the two remaining days of the week to the Adler and Alphubel Passes. Madame Seiler welcomed me as an old friend, and notwithstanding the crowd of visitors she found rooms for us. As bronzed by the sun and arrayed in a blouse I was walking upstairs, a couple of young men asked as I passed, 'From what frightful peak have you just come?' I felt, I confess, rather an impostor in my red skin and mountainous-looking attire, for we had only crossed from Breuil; so I owned with humility the mildness of our day's proceedings. They happened to sit opposite us at table d'hôte, and after dinner asked some questions about snow work, as they contemplated the ascent of Monte Rosa; they looked active, so we asked them to join us next day, although their mountaineering experience was limited to crossing the Tschingel, over which, however, they had carried their own knapsacks. We certainly had no cause to regret our invitation, for they added greatly to our merriment, and indeed, by their pluck and willing obedience in difficulties, to our safety. Our new friends turned out to be Messrs. Fayle and Vigor, graduates of Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

We wished to economise our powers next day to the utmost, for the Adler is said to be a difficult pass. So we arranged for a mule to carry the Canon as far up towards the ice as possible, that he might be fresh when we arrived at the difficulties. We were called at 3 A.M., and soon after four finished breakfast, and set off, giving the mule for its load our two knapsacks as well as the Professor. The waiters and porter came down to see us off, half amused, half awestruck at our rash attempt without guides. Herr Seiler was perhaps most amusing in the expressive look he bestowed on us when Fayle and Vigor told him they were joining us, for they had brought him a note from some Alpine Club friend, begging him to procure for them good guides, as they were beginners. But he knew me of old, and looked exceedingly comical over the way in which he was providing his protegés with guides.

It was a beautiful morning, and the walk up to the Findelen glacier was very enjoyable. The mule was able to accompany us for an hour and a half, after which the path was too rough even for its patience; and the Canon dismounting, Fayle and I shouldered the knapsacks, and we all walked on. At about this point we saw a couple of men ahead, who, on hearing our jodell of discovery, quickened their pace, and we began to hope that, anxious to reach the summit before us, they would undertake all the work of step-cutting with which the guide-book had rather frightened us. For my own part, I am always ready in the Alps to yield the honour, together with the

toil, of priority to any one anxious for the post. On this occasion, however, both were reserved for us, as the party in front shortly turned to the right in the direction of the Weissthor, and we saw no more of them.

We now clambered on to a moraine, and for a considerable distance walked along the sharp ridge into which it was formed on the top. At about 8.30 we halted for breakfast on first gaining the ice, and then threaded our way up a tolerably easy ice-fall, cutting occasionally two or three steps. When this was over we found ourselves on a snow slope whence the summit of the pass was unmistakably visible. We now plodded along, finding the crevasses, which were rather numerous, securely bridged over; we kept to our left, and so gained the edge of the glacier under the steep cliffs of the Allaleinhorn.

The ice here formed a kind of arête, with a depression between it and the rocks to the left, and with a slope to the right, at first of moderate gradient and snowclad, but becoming as we mounted exceedingly steep, and with only a loose covering on it of the new snow which had fallen two days previously. We proceeded with occasionally a little step-cutting until I found that one of the party was feeling quite faint. At this I rather took fright, for a slip down the ice slope would have been at least very awkward; and we attempted to descend into the depression to the left, with a view of mounting up the rocks, as we were now not more than a couple of hundred feet below their summit. We had great difficulty in gaining their foot, as there were chasms in the depression between us and it; and the snow,

while not in the least attached to the ice, and therefore affording no safe footing, was too deep to admit of cutting steps through it into the solid ice. To add to our troubles, one of the party could not be persuaded to keep the rope taut between himself and his predecessor—a precaution which novices rarely understand, and yet perhaps the most essential of all to safety in such a situation, as being a preventive of the possibility of a jerk on the whole party if one member happen to slip. So it was not in the best of tempers that at last I laid my hand on rock. Had the rocks been solid and afforded good holding it would have been far more satisfactory to have ascended by them; but they proved abominable, being both rotten, and with the grain set in such a manner as to afford little or no holding. So after scrambling a little way up like a spread-eagle I was entreated to return, and coinciding in opinion I did so, and we once more took to our arête. We now had a good deal of vigorous step-cutting, for the ice soon became entirely bare, and showers of it dislodged by my trusty old axe found their way down the backs of my companions below. The hollow to our left soon came to an end; but by keeping close to the rocks we had a certain amount of holding until we left them, about twenty yards from the summit, to cut our way across the ice slope to the lowest depression in the ridge, which we reached at about 1.30 P.M.

The view from this point is truly superb. All the great mountains around Zermatt stood up in imposing magnificence, and Monte Rosa disclosed its great precipices on

the Macugnaga side, while the snow mountains of Savoy formed the background. It was not until we had descended a little on the Saas side that we gained the striking panorama of the Bernese Oberland and the Bernina and Orteler ranges.

The views from this pass are certainly among the most splendid I have ever seen, and combine all that is visible from the Gorner Grat with a range to be obtained usually only from very high peaks.

But we found a strong and cold wind blowing on the summit, and were forced almost immediately to descend into a bergschrund very conveniently situated for our purpose, where we dined in comparative shelter and comfort.

We had intended to ascend the Strahlhorn from the pass, but our food, on which we had made considerable attacks previously, entirely yielded to our onslaught at dinner: we therefore gave up the peak, being anxious as soon as might be to arrive at some hospitable châlet. The descent of the glacier on the Saas side was uncommonly easy, and, thanks to the Ordnance map, we had no difficulty in quitting the ice at the proper point, though the fresh snow had destroyed all traces of former travellers, which so generally serve as a guide in difficulties. On leaving the glacier, we stood on the top of a ridge, which overlooked the Mattmark See, and formed one side of a lateral valley opening out at the little lake. We followed at first a kind of path which led down the slope of shale, but soon this ended, and we reached a pathless grassy bank,

which rapidly became steeper, and ended in precipices. Below stood a shepherd, watching our efforts to discover any way down. He was too far off for words, and made no sign to direct us in answer to our repeated hallooings. At last I caught sight of a sheep track a good deal above us, winding over the shoulder of the hill; and, bidding my companions follow if I halloed, I climbed up again, and soon announced by my shouts that it was the right path. Fayle and Vigor, who sat down while I searched, followed at once, whilst I hurried on, anxious to reach the châlet below. But the Professor was soaring off in quest of a path elsewhere, and to our mortification, on reaching the châlet, we could see him wandering about on the slopes, peering over the precipices, and quite indifferent to all our signals to him to climb up again and come round. So we sent off the shepherd to show him the way, and meanwhile regaled ourselves with no little appetite on cream, curds and whey, and black bread.

We unfortunately lost more than an hour by this waiting, so that it was about seven when we again started, and it was pitch dark long before we had all stumbled down the abominable path from the Mattmark See to Saas. Right glad we were, at 9 P.M., to sit down after a good wash to our much needed supper.

*** Charge for each guide, 25 frs.

THE ALPHUBEL PASS.

Now for our mountain sport; up to yon hill:
Your legs are young; I'll tread these flats. Consider
When you above perceive me like a crow
That it is place which lessens and sets off.—*Shakspeare.*

THE landlord of the Hôtel Monte Moro at Saas deserves to be gibbeted. Once before, when I stayed at Saas, his dilatory habits had annoyed us, while his excessive charges led to our cutting off half his bill. But on this occasion he nearly ruined our projected excursion.

We had arrived, as I have said, very late on Friday night, after a hard day on the Adler; so, with a view of recruiting our strength, we postponed the hour for being called till five next morning, but, in order to lose no time then, ordered our breakfast over-night. We were called punctually enough, and found to our chagrin that the glorious blue sky of the previous day had changed into a dull leaden-grey mass of cloud. Undaunted by this, however, three of us arose, loath to return by the dusty Stalden route to Zermatt, but leaving the Professor, with his weight of years, to meditate perchance on the above consolatory philosophy of Shakspeare, during a more prolonged repose in bed well deserved after his enterprise and toils on the Adler. He agreed to go round and meet us in the evening at Zermatt.

When we came down to breakfast absolutely nothing was ready. At length three meagre, tough chops made their appearance; whereupon I went down to the kitchen

and made such a commotion that a sufficient supply at length did arrive, though, indeed, too tough to be of much good. The waitress, happily, was most active and obliging, but it was not her province to make out the bill, and it was not till seven that we could get this document from the landlord, which on this occasion was reasonable enough. He almost seemed to delay on purpose, as though disposed to prevent our passage of the Alphubel without guides, which he knew we meant to attempt.

A breakfast of such a sort, consumed at last in a hurry, produced its worst effects on me. I was obliged to walk exceedingly slowly, and to lie down for more than an hour on the way, before reaching the summit of the Gletscher Alp, where we took to the ice.

The scenery in crossing the Fee Alp up to this point is wonderfully beautiful, and the descriptions of it are not in the least exaggerated, I should judge, though the clouds lay low, and concealed all the grandest part of the view. But towards midday the sun shone out with extraordinary power, and we were never more broiled than while mounting up the snow slopes beyond to the summit of the pass. We had unfortunately to-day taken no cold tea with us, for we expected cold, bad weather.

We found, happily, a track on the snow made apparently a day or two before, for I was not at all in condition for much hard work in finding the way. But it did not turn out so good a guide as might have been expected. Very soon after roping for the ice, we came to a chasm where the bridge of our predecessors had fallen in; but we were able to descend to a ledge on our side, and, stepping over

to another projection, cut steps up the opposite face. The slopes were rather steep, and at times we had to hurry up them where they were liable to be swept by avalanches falling from the ice-crowned crags above us on our right. Once or twice we descended into bergschrunds with most treacherous floorings of snow, through cracks in which we could see the long icicles hanging in blue space below. At length, the crevasses passed, we thought on reaching a smooth snow slope that we were close to the summit of the pass, but here all track suddenly vanished, either through the influence of the sun's heat or owing to fresh snow having fallen; and almost as suddenly down came the clouds upon us, which had been threatening again, and we were left to make our way as best we could.

The glacier air had happily set me to rights, and we plodded on steadily towards the summit of the ridge as well as we could judge; this seemed the more to retire into mist the longer we walked; and nothing is so deceptive as a snow slope in a fog. It is then almost absolutely impossible to judge of distance, or indeed to discriminate between a ridge and a slope, and so we found. However, at last, but it really was a long 'last,' we gained the summit, almost to our surprise at not being further disappointed. Here, on looking over, we saw, as far as the fog allowed, a most impracticable ice wall terminated by a precipice. Clearly we had struck a wrong point in the ridge. However, I felt sure that the pass itself lay not far off to the right; and we spread out a waterproof, and sat down to dinner. Suddenly the fog

lifted a little for a few minutes, and scattering our provisions on the snow, we started up and hurried off in different directions, to gain as much of view amongst us as we could, and then returned and continued our meal, while the fog became thicker than ever, and it began to snow.

Our repast ended, we prepared with lightened knapsacks to start, wrapping up well and buttoning up tightly, so as to be prepared for a storm. We had settled which direction to take, and it proved to be the right one; for, after racing down a slope, we came in ten minutes upon a track—poor enough, indeed: it was made by wanderers in a fog, as we afterwards learned, and before the last snow—yet worth having in a snow-storm. Down we rushed; at times on an ice-slope, cutting hurried steps, or sliding pell-mell where a bank of snow below afforded a soft halting-place. Occasionally we saw something of the track; often we could only trust to a continuation of its general direction. After a time we kept along a ridge of rock which cropped up out of the ice. The glacier to the left of it soon sank far below its level, leaving us to walk on the edge of a precipice; but footmarks occasionally visible on patches of débris assured us that man had preceded us in our course. The ice to the right now became split up by crevasses, and the rocks came to an end in front, so a descent by them was inevitable.

I went down to the extent of my tether, and then, unbelting, proceeded farther to search for the best way; which found, I re-mounted, and joined my comrades. We now moved one at a time, while the other two held on, in case

of a slip; for the rock was rotten, and in parts covered with loose débris, rendering our progress very insecure. We pursued a course rather near to the ice, and then straight down the steep buttress of rock. Over this the glacier to the right hung in the most forbidding-looking masses, and blocks detached from it were scattered for yards upon the glacier below. We were clearly not on the proper course of the Alphubel, but on one of those islands of rock marked on the map to the north of the route.

Silence and speed were now enjoined on all; and with a view to increased pace, I detached Fayle, who was on the middle of the rope, and lowered Vigor by our whole length, about sixty feet, to the bottom, where he was unbelted, and hurried over the avalanche débris out of harm's way, while in turn Fayle was lowered. Then, casting off the rope for him to gather up and attach to Vigor, I clambered down, and soon rejoined them. Once more we roped. No track was visible; so we kept towards a moraine in front, which, taking its origin in the rocks we had just quitted, was buried for a while under the ice, and then rose to the surface again. In five minutes we saw a few footmarks, and hurried along towards a break in the moraine. Suddenly I all but disappeared in a crevasse, in which I sank up to the neck; but, catching by my axe, was out in a moment, and—thanks to the wisdom of my companions, who did not, as is too often done, tug at the rope—with the breath not squeezed out of my body. On we ran, anxious to make use for as long a time as possible of the traces which the falling snow would soon completely destroy.

But these quickly ended finally, and we continued our course till within sight of a large moraine on the right. This I hoped might be a lateral moraine, and so it turned out; for, on shouting, an echo proved the neighbourhood of rocks, which almost immediately appeared through the mist. Very soon we were below the level of the clouds, and saw to our joy the end of the glacier, and a green valley. We now unroped, ate and drank the small residue of our food, and without delay easily quitted the ice. Our predecessors had evidently taken the same course, as we saw by the disturbed state of the stones on our path.

The grass gained, we soon made our way down to the châlets of Täsch, where the cows had just been milked, and pails of hot milk were awaiting us. At about seven we passed on, and took the short cut to Zermatt, along a water-channel, through a pine forest. But darkness now came on, and we lost our way completely. So, after a wearisome amount of stumbling about, we resolved to make our way straight down to the valley below. Here was the real fatigue of the day; nor was the danger of broken bones inconsiderable, as we descended the very steep slope, among felled trunks, stumps, stones, hollows, and water-courses, with not even a moon to shed its feeble light among the trees.

A whitish patch was presently visible; and we tumbled over a high rotten fence into it, and found a field of barley, on the slope. Potatoes, ploughed land, and more barley succeeded. This was delightfully soft and safe walking after the pitfalls we had been traversing; but our

traces must have been painfully obvious next morning. Great allowance, however, must be made for mountaineers after a long day, and I here present our united apologies to the owners. We reached the main road at length, rather more than a mile above Täsch; and at 9.30 P.M. or thereabouts stood opposite the Monte Rosa Hotel, where our triumphant jodell had brought the Professor to the door to welcome us.

Herr Seiler declared that his wife had been in the greatest distress for our safety: at any rate, both welcomed us heartily; and the only disappointment that we caused may have been to some tourists who had been promised our bedrooms if we had lost our lives or otherwise been prevented from returning. As it was, our beds groaned under us for a lengthened period that night, and certain mattresses in the smoking-room proved, it is to be hoped, sufficient consolation to our disappointed friends.

*** Charge for each guide 25 frs.

THE COL D'HERENS.

Er schreitet verwegen auf Feldern von Eis,
Da pranget kein Frühling, da grünet kein Reis,
Und unter den Füssen ein neblichtes Meer
Erblickt er die Städte der Menschen nicht mehr.—*Schiller.*

RATHER tired after our labours on the Adler and Alphubel, we agreed to add to our Sunday's rest a lounging day on Monday, especially as the weather, which became execrable on Sunday, would so have the opportunity of

mending. Accordingly, on Monday, each awoke when nature prompted that feat, and we dropped in one after another to breakfast, and then repaired to the Riffel for a little mountain air. I found Professor Tyndall on the Gorner Grat, who—prudent man that he is—repeated a little of the advice which he gave me in *Macmillan* lately, but was half inclined to join our expedition the next day. However, gallantry kept him as guide to the party at the Riffel, and after a climb together up the Riffelhorn, I parted from him at the close of table-d'hôte, with his best wishes for our excursion.

The good-natured Ober-kellner at Zermatt promised to call us at two next morning, unless the weather were bad, and a proper paraphernalia of beefsteaks and tea was ordered for breakfast. We were called, though clouds hung low in the valley at a uniform dull level, hiding every peak and even the summits of the pine forests. However, we rose; for, being lodged in a cottage, we could not otherwise communicate with a proposed addition to our party in the person of a young fellow who had wished to try the pass with us. He had been rather enthusiastic about it, and we felt sure would be getting up in the hotel where he was lodged.

At breakfast the steaks, as of late had been the custom at Zermatt, were unendurably tough, but we worked manfully at them for a time. We were a good deal delayed by sending off our baggage to Sion, and still more by the cook cleaving to his bed—no wonder, poor man, for we travellers try the servants sorely at both ends of the night.

But it was vexatious, especially in such doubtful weather, and when all our time might become valuable in getting over a long pass. To add to our discontent, No. 5, without assigning any reason, announced, as soon as he appeared, that he had given up the idea of joining us, and meant to cross the Theodule. But a waverer would have been a worse than useless companion; so we parted with him and our discontent together, after a good English grumble among ourselves. One more delay and we were off at four. The mule which was ordered to bear our knapsacks and the Canon to the foot of the glacier had been carried off by some of the two or three other parties who were starting about the same time for the Theodule, and another meanwhile had to be sent for. We three pedestrians accordingly gently set forth, leaving the Professor to catch us up, which he shortly did.

The sky, or rather the mist, was still more unpromising than before breakfast, and we soon climbed up into it, and could only see dimly and for a distance of a few yards. All were thinking of the comparative luxury of a descent to Visp, but no one grumbled, and I said nothing, but resolutely walked on. For an hour and a half this lasted, till we arrived at the Oberstaffel, the highest châlets just at the foot of the Zmutt glacier. Here the muleteer drove his beast into the most awkward place he could find, with a view no doubt of showing us that he did not mean to go further, and of gently inducing the Professor to dismount. He was paid off; and now the inevitable council of war as to our position was held. But the mist had

been lifting a little, or rather we had been rising above it, and all agreed to proceed; though I, for my own part, was quite prepared for the possibility of a return to the châlet and a fresh attack on the pass next day; but each kept his thoughts, if he had such, to himself. We soon were compelled to take at times to the moraine, which, at the bottom of this glacier, entirely covers the ice; but we kept as much as possible to the slope between it and the Matterhorn, under splendid pinnacles of ice, high above on the left, which evidently were ready at any moment to topple over and fall down in avalanches. One or two such ice-avalanches fell while we were passing, but not so near as to give us alarm. The sky meanwhile became much clearer, and masses of ice and rock appeared glistening through the clouds. We took to the glacier about an hour after reaching its foot, and worked our way over the wavy and slippery ice to the foot of the Stockje—an island of rock by which, where the glacier becomes inconveniently steep, the ascent is made. It was 9 A.M. when we reached a point where we halted for breakfast, at the foot of the rocks. In coming over the glaciers from Chermontane, in 1868, I had descended the Col d'Herens to Zermatt, though I had not seen anything of the Evolena side of the pass. It was on that occasion sunset when we reached the summit of the pass, and we came down in the dark; but I found the knowledge of the way which I then gained very useful now, though the route is accurately traced on the Ordnance map.

The rocks of the Stockje are very easy. Indeed, for the

most part the path lies over a slope of shale débris, and in about three-quarters of an hour we were on the summit, where we roped ourselves together, and prepared for the snow. The Matterhorn at length stood forth unclouded, in a drapery of fresh snow, which was continuously falling down the steep precipices. I never witnessed so remarkable a spectacle: the snow was light and perfectly dry, and there was little or no wind; so, as it slipped off the ledges, the snow formed the most beautiful festoons, as though the whole Matterhorn were sheathed in a delicate waterfall. Such a phenomenon must be exceedingly rare, requiring a combination of peculiar conditions of mountain, snow and atmosphere.

The summit of our col was now perfectly in sight. From the Adler I had carefully surveyed the pass, and determined on our general course among the crevasses. But now, through my glasses, I saw that the last hundred yards would be a source of considerable difficulty, and probably of danger. The new snow, which had fallen during the previous two or three days, had given rise already to avalanches, which swept right down the very steep slope below the summit, and a long, overhanging cornice laden with it appeared to bar, without a break, the actual ridge.

The survey ended, we stepped on to the glacier without further delay. We did not sink more than ankle-deep at first, and with no great trouble or difficulty we worked round two or three great networks of crevasses, until the slope became steeper, and we sank knee-deep in the snow.

The clouds were now gathering once more, and rapidly; so I determined on leading as straight up to the col as possible, notwithstanding some treacherous-looking bergschrunds. We kept the rope taut, for the snow here was rather loose, and lying apparently on a slope of hard ice. Two or three schrunds were carefully crossed, the snow regelating sufficiently under the slowly-applied pressure of our feet; and then came a short but very steep climb, between the tracks of two avalanches, to the base of a wall of rock immediately below the cornice. On reaching the rocks, we walked under their shelter, along the upper edge of a bergschrund which guards them; and then Fayle coming close to me so as to give me rope enough, but remaining himself in shelter, I climbed the rocks, which were steep though not difficult, but which were completely exposed to avalanches from the cornice above. As rapidly as possible I proceeded, until entirely under the cornice, where, in comparative shelter, I could stand and with the rope assist Fayle, who in turn helped up the others. A few steps under the cornice brought us to a point where I had determined to cross the pass, having seen just before the fog closed on us, as it now had done again, that this was the sole gap in the overhanging eave of ice which barred our course. Here there was a short vertical snow-wall, a little difficult, owing to the yielding of the snow, which gave way under me altogether at first; but with a second effort I reached over with my axe to the downward slope on the north side, and in a moment, with a shout of triumph, stood on the summit.

The whole difficulty of the ice and rock was now vanquished, as we knew from the guide-book. But there we stood, at a height of nearly 12,000 feet, in a dense fog, unable to see even a dark object a dozen yards off, and with absolutely no view of the very snow at our feet. It was only 1.30, so we had plenty of time, and spreading a mackintosh to sit upon, we put the rope under our feet, to keep them from the cold snow (a precaution, I may add, which might always be adopted with great advantage under such circumstances), and made a hearty dinner, followed by a due allowance of tobacco, to give time to the fog to lift. The air was not very cold, and the fog instead of diminishing only increased. Moreover, it began to snow. So at about 2.30 we packed up and prepared to start. Having made a line with a stock along the snow in the direction in which to start, we gave a parting yell to the air; but to our surprise a response came from below—a party was following us evidently. In English, French, and German, by turns, we attempted to find out of whom it consisted, but in vain. They questioned us and listened to our answers, but would give us no information. So, uncertain whether they might be mountaineers or a party of guides sent after us by our anxious friends, we wasted no more time in straining our sight into the fog, but leaving them to this day as one of the enigmas of history, we strolled downwards towards Evolena, a village in a glen which at Sion joins the great Rhône valley. The slope was very gentle, and it was difficult to tell at times whether we were going down hill.

But we frequently consulted the compass and the Ordnance map, and though we could not see the snow, except where marked by our track, we could see one another, and so kept a fairly straight line. However, we came upon some séracs in half-an-hour's time, by which I knew that we were too much to the left, and we turned pretty sharply to the right and rather uphill to avoid them. In doing this we came upon tracks made quite recently, for all made previously to that day had been entirely destroyed by the new snow. They came to an end where I stood; obviously, therefore, some one had come from out of the dim fogginess to this point and returned upon his tracks, which were carefully made, the person or party having retraced the deep foot-prints made on coming. We determined to follow the track, as it certainly would serve us in the fog as a guide to Evolena, there being no other place from which hunter or tourist could have come to the right-hand side of the glacier, unless from Zermatt, whence we knew by the undisturbed carpet of snow no one had preceded us.

The track became now an object of absorbing interest and curiosity. Soon we saw clearly it was that of a party who were lost in the clouds; side tracks went off and returned, and here and there large areas of snow had been trampled down, exactly as if there had been a fight, where consultation about the way had been held. From time to time we hallooed, and about an hour after leaving the summit an answering halloo was returned, and we soon saw dark figures through the fog. As we drew near they shouted.

'Who are you?'

'Four English gentlemen,' we replied. But that was not at all satisfactory apparently, for the question was immediately repeated. So I shouted out my own name; and when we came up, out was stretched a hand, and there stood Mr. Robertson of Rugby, a well-known mountaineer, with three or four guides and three friends, including a lady.

Prudence compelled us to shorten the interview, and we just directed their guides on the nearest way to the summit, while they put us on the most direct of their tracks towards Evolena; and with hearty good wishes we parted—not without their first enquiring as to our store of wine, which was unfortunately exhausted; for their host had packed up cognac for them in mistake for wine, and with a lady in the party, especially, this was a great misfortune.

We now followed their rather circuitous course as quickly as possible, for the snow began to fall fast and thick, and we feared lest the track should be destroyed. It is particularly unpleasant to hurry through deep snow, and it was not without certain groans and protestations from at least one of my followers, with legs considerably less lengthy than my own, that we rattled along. But all things come to an end, and in due time we found ourselves on a moraine, with no tracks, but also with no more deep snow. Here we unroped, and continued our course, with no little slipping about on the wet snow lying

loosely on steep grass slopes: but we soon reached a cattle track, which led us to the châlets of Driscolla.

The sight of cows is always pleasant on landing from a long glacier expedition; and doubly pleasant was it to-day to us snow-clad people, with beards and whiskers no more black, but glistening icicles. Deep were our potations of milk and cream over the châlet fire! Even nature rejoiced with us, for the snow ceased, and we left fogs behind us. At 6 P.M. we started on again; but our perils were not ended, for scarcely had we quitted the châlet than, with but brief notice, there bounded across our path a large block of rock, over the very heads of Vigor and myself, who barely were able to crouch down just in time to avoid it.

We now quickened our pace, mindful of our dark walk in the Saas Thal, and reached Evolena at 8.15.

The luxury of that hotel at Evolena! the good dinner! the delicious tubs! The eight-feet long beds in which we could really stretch and sleep with no dreams of overhanging rocks cramping us down! The kindly attendants! All these have gilded our thoughts of toil, and now, that day week precisely, as I sit in my Oxford rooms, jotting down my recollections of the pass, I can look placidly back to a snow-storm without guides on the Col d'Herens.

*** A Zermatt guide charges 30 frs. for this pass; an Evolena guide 20, but the latter requires two to be taken.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUGGESTIONS TO ALPINE TOURISTS.

Fungar vice cotis, acutum
Reddere quæ ferrum valet, exsors ipsa secandi.—*Horace.*

THE following hints on travelling and mountaineering may probably many of them be found scattered up and down different guide-books. They are, however, here set down, not as the result of reading, but as due to the experience of the author during many summers. They may prove especially useful to those who run to the Alps with small purses but vigorous limbs. The author has passed a portion of every long vacation since his university matriculation in Switzerland; and many an undergraduate might do well in spending in like manner part of his time in reading for the 'schools' at some elevated mountain inn, such as the Engstlen Alp, Stein Alp, or Mürren; but mostly seeking for a stock of health which should enable him to dispense with vacation for the rest of the year. The suggestions are intended not only for those who wish to mountaineer without guides, but for all who have not, from experience, made rules for themselves.

They are divided into those on (*a*) preliminary matters, such as the journey to the Alps; (*b*) expenses; (*c*) equip-

ment; (*d*) precautions for an expedition, especially when unaccompanied by guides; (*e*) finding the way.

(*a*) *The journey to the Alps.*—Those who have at their disposal less than a month, and who dislike third-class travelling, will find Cook's tourists' tickets very serviceable and economical. The objection to them is that they compel the traveller to return by the route which he fixes upon when purchasing the ticket: whereas weather, the friends he may meet, and a host of circumstances may afterwards cause him to change his mind. It is indeed a useful general rule not to *fix* plans for a whole tour, but to reserve liberty at any time to diverge from the sketch at first proposed.

Travelling 3rd-class is cheaper, and leaves the tourist independent as to the return journey. I—to drop the 'author,' and be brief and explicit—generally take a 3rd-class ticket to Paris by Dover and Calais, and either proceed at once to Switzerland by the 3.5 P.M. train, 3rd-class, *viâ* Dijon and Pontarlier, or, spending the night in Paris, take the *Chemin de fer de l'Est* to Bâle, on which there is a fast 3rd-class train leaving Paris at 7.20 A.M., and reaching Bâle at 7.55 P.M. The latter is far the more pleasant route, for the train is fast, no passengers enter the 3rd-class carriages after its departure from Paris till towards evening, and there is no long waiting or night travelling.

The journey by Dijon, on the other hand, is most wearisome, and badly arranged, but affords the shortest and cheapest route to Zermatt and most of the south-west of Switzerland. It can, however, for sixteen francs, be ren-

dered much less fatiguing by using the 1st-class express between Paris and Dijon. In this case a 3rd-class ticket should be taken through, and the excess fare paid either at the office or in the train. Thirty hours then suffice for the journey from London to Lausanne, if the day service between London and Paris be used.

The expenses of various routes will be found under section (*b*). I may add, from personal experience, that 3rd-class travelling is not at all unpleasant abroad; and to make up for the occasional smell of garlic, or for unwelcome sights, there is abundance of merriment, such as the conventional respectability of 1st, or especially 2nd class, would forbid. Thus, I find in my journal of 1866: 'E. and I took 3rd-class tickets at Charing Cross for Paris. They let us go 2nd-class to Folkestone, and 1st-class to Boulogne. E. and the only other passenger in our carriage lay on the two seats, while I stretched myself on the floor rolled up in an overcoat, and we all slept till Folkestone was reached. It was a bright moonlight night, and the voyage was very pleasant. At Boulogne we had time to wash and breakfast, after which we left, at 6 A.M., for Paris, which we reached at 1.30. We drove at once to the Lyons station, dined there, and left at 3.30' (the train varies from year to year its precise time for starting), '3rd-class, for Lausanne. From Paris as far as Dijon we had three soldiers for fellow-travellers. They were hearty, amusing men. When it grew dark, four lay on the seats, while the fifth took to the floor, and all slept. At Dijon, E. and I had to change, and slept in a miserable waiting-

room for a couple of hours. At 3 A.M. we started for Pontarlier, where a good wash and breakfast, for which time is allowed, set us to rights.' Our toilet in the train always astonishes the natives; but the crowning and surprising feat, which I always leave for the final *coup*, is the donning a collar and necktie. Until that action, conversation proceeds with the easy familiarity of *sansculottes*, but thereupon they suddenly relapse into silence, as wild dogs might with a well-combed and chained house-dog.

It is very economical both in time and money to be able to carry all one's baggage, and to have it in the carriage, not in a van. I find a large black bag will contain what I want for a couple of months. In it are stowed away knapsack, rope, and everything but axe. The bag can be sent from village to village by post in Switzerland, while the traveller carries in the knapsack what is needful for two or three days.

It adds greatly to pleasure and to economy to be able to speak the languages of the countries visited. I have found German to be most useful, French next, and Italian to be also of service. Ollendorff's grammars soon give enough knowledge for necessary conversation. They are useful as containing so much that is idiomatic. But a further acquaintance with a language adds greatly to a traveller's pleasure; and a month spent on the way at a German or French town is of value to a beginner. A considerable amount of self-possession in a language is necessary for a traveller, without guides, enquiring the way.

It is very convenient to have a pair of slippers to put on

in the train, as well as for use at bivouacs afterwards: still better are soft leather or canvas boating-shoes, which do not so easily become wet through. A sponge, comb, bit of soap, and tooth-brush *at hand* in the bag, come in very usefully at places where the train halts for meals or changes. At most 'buffets' one can have water and a basin for the asking.

Five-pound notes and sovereigns are the most convenient forms of money to take. But always provide enough native money before plunging into very remote places. In France, Switzerland, and Italy, napoleons (16*s.*), francs (20 to the napoleon), and centimes (100 to the franc) pass current. But Swiss francs and centimes are useless in France, and should be changed at the frontier. French francs pass everywhere in Switzerland; the centimes do not. Papal francs do not pass in Switzerland, and travellers should be on their guard against them in that country, where they are often given, but never received, by the natives (1869).

Distances are measured either by kilomètres (nearly two-thirds of a mile), or by 'stunden' (hours). The latter mode of measurement is very uncertain. I have found stunden to be on level roads sometimes four miles, usually only three. In mountainous parts they generally vary according to the steepness. In Bädeker's guide-books ample allowance of time is always given. In Mr. Ball's book this varies with the source of the information; and, in considering at what time to start for an expedition under the light of 'The Alpine Guide,' care should be

taken to notice whose account is being relied upon. A little experience of the book soon introduces one to the rapid walkers.

(*b*) *Expenses.*—Two or three hints as to economy have been thrown out in the preceding section. Bädeker is very trustworthy in his hotel information. But the character of an hotel changes with its proprietor. In general I have found it advisable, in Italy and in remote places, to choose the best hotel, so as to avoid dirt. At great mountaineering centres, such as Chamouni and Grindelwald, one meets at the best hotels with most mountaineers; but in towns I invariably eschew the large hotels, and choose those where the proprietor is 'freundlich,' and where fashionable idleness does not cumber the ground.

Examine your bill! In some places, as at Livigno, it is made with chalk on the table. If the charges are *really* immoderate, the landlord will usually submit readily to its reduction; but allowance at mountain inns must be made for the cost of porterage, not only of food and often of fuel, but also of labour—nor should the shortness of the season for visitors be forgotten.

I subjoin a brief statement of the accounts of the last seven tours that I have made. They include all expenses of every kind, with journeys to and from London.

1863.—Abroad for 97 days at a total cost of 44*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* Went *viâ* Great Luxemburg Railway to Bâle. The tour included Zurich (a month's halt for work), Rosenlaui, Ragaz, Glarus, Engadine, Bologna, Ravenna, Venice, Ampezzo Thal, Innsbruck, and Munich. The cost of a

guide on one occasion is included. The return journey from Munich to London, *viâ* Ostend and the Thames, 3rd-class rail, 1st-class steamer, was about 2*l.* 10*s.*

1864.—92 days at a total cost of 44*l.* 14*s.*, *viâ* Paris, Bâle and Lausanne. The Engadine, Brescia, and Como were visited. An expenditure of 52 frs. upon guides is included.

1865.—108 days for 60*l.* 15*s.* Chamouni, Courmayeur, Zermatt, Meiringen, Engadine, the Stelvio, Salzburg, Ischl, Vienna, Prague, Dresden and Rotterdam will show the extent of country traversed. Guides were taken two or three times.

1866.—56 days for 32*l.* 3*s.* The area visited was small, its outposts being Milan, Lucerne, and Lausanne. Went out *viâ* Pontarlier; back *viâ* Bâle. 40 frs. spent upon a guide is included.

1867.—57 days for 42*l.* 10*s.*, including 98 frs. spent on guides. Lausanne, Pontresina, and the Lake of Como mark out our district for this year. The above sum includes the following fares:—To Paris, 3rd-class, South-Eastern Railway, 1*l.*; to Pontarlier, 1st-class express, 51 frs.; to Lausanne, 3rd-class, 7 frs. 40 c.; Interlaken to Bâle, 3rd-class, 9 frs. 20 c.; Bâle to Paris, 3rd-class, 32 frs. 30 c.; to London, 1*l.*

1868.—33 days for 25*l.* 2*s.*, including 140 frs. for guides. This tour was limited to Chamouni, Zermatt, and the intervening district. No expedition, without guides, of any importance was made by me this year, but a portion of the high-level route, ascents of the Matterhorn and the

Weisshorn, and the tour of the Lyskamm, aided by guides, quite made up for the want. To Bâle *viâ* Paris. Bâle to Lausanne, 11frs. 40c.; Sion to Paris, 3rd-class, 40frs. 5c.

1869.—26 days for 22*l.* 4*s.*, including a guide 24 frs. Return-ticket to Paris, 2nd-class, *viâ* Newhaven, 1*l.* 16*s.*; Sion to Paris, 40 frs. 5c.; extra fare paid at Dijon to travel 1st-class thence to Paris, 16 fr. Chamouni, Contamines, Courmayeur, and Saas were our outposts.

Great economy may be effected in two ways in taking guides, when a little experience in mountaineering has been obtained. First, by making a private arrangement with a guide, in place of adopting the tariff price. Guides soon find out if one is determined not to give an exorbitant sum such as is usually asked, and they often readily consent to a reduction, if the traveller is used to mountaineering, and especially if he agrees to carry his own knapsack—on which grounds too a single guide will often act where at least two are usually taken. A second plan is to pick up a good chamois-hunter who is not a professional guide. Such a man will often make his way magnificently through difficulties where a professed guide would hesitate; and will always take reasonable pay. Thus, in 1868, Mr. Utterson Kelso and I picked up a chamois-hunter of Bagnes, who took us from Chermontane to Zermatt in a day for 24 frs. And we both agreed that no professional man could have conducted us more ably down the exceedingly difficult ice-fall of Vuibez than did he. Such men hurry along, do not offer a hand, and often take the most difficult route; but they make a

passable way of some sort, and are as sure as a rock to trust to in difficult situations. Joseph Gillom, the hunter to whom I have just referred, certainly served us as well as Melchior himself could have done.

(*c*) *Equipment.*—I shall first set down the list of things to which I always refer before starting, and then make remarks upon any which require it.

Large black leather bag, knapsack or havresac, axe or alpenstock, umbrella (?), rope, belt, strong lace-boots, one pair of spare laces, boating-shoes, mountain-gloves, dark spectacles, veil, opera-glass, cold cream, calendula, diachylon, lint, bandage, medicine, tea, Liebig's extract, pocket-flask and cup, string, needles, &c., metal match-box, compass, maps, guide-books, gaiters, comforter, waterproof, straw hat, light spare shirt, as well as ordinary changes of clothing, small articles for toilette, stationery, passport. The smoker should take out his own tobacco, for this is rarely to be met with of good quality, save in the form of cigars.

A knapsack does not shake about so much as a havresac, and does not confine the chest; but is heavier in itself, and by raising the wearer's centre of gravity more than does a havresac, it makes him less steady; it also employs both shoulders, whereas with a havresac each shoulder can have rest alternately.

It is advisable to have at least two axes among the members of a party, in case one should break or be dropped—not of the Alpine Club pattern, which combines in itself almost every possible fault. The pick-end of the

axe-head should slope rather downwards from the centre, especially on its lower edge, which should be furnished with a few teeth turned towards the handle; these render it very useful for holding on to ice or rock. An alpenstock renders glissading easier to beginners, but for all other purposes a light long-handled axe is better at the commencement of mountaineering; afterwards a shorter handle and a heavy head render the axe more useful. Durran, of High Street, Oxford, has a good pattern. When a considerable tour is intended, an umbrella is useful to ward off rain and sun; it can be sent about by post when the axe is in use.

A strong light rope is best procured in England; 40 ft. is enough for two or three travellers. I obtain, and use with perfect satisfaction, Buckingham's lightest club-rope. Much that is said about the necessity of very strong rope is founded on error. I use the same rope for several years in succession, although it certainly becomes weaker; because a place must be very bad where the rope cannot be kept so far taut as to prevent the chance of a sudden and tremendous strain upon it, and on such a place every one would infallibly be pulled over by the shock of the strain before an ordinary window-cord would reach its point of rupture. On this ground I think that club-rope might be made a size smaller than it is. The apparent exception to this statement presented by the fatal accident on the first ascent of the Matterhorn vanishes before the fact that, owing to the inexperience of one of the mountaineers, the rope could not be kept taut between him

and his guide, and thus the rope was subjected to a sudden strain where the holding of some of the party was good. Bad mountaineering—not a bad rope—appears to have been the cause of that lamentable catastrophe.

Boots should have low heels, so as not to throw too much of the wear and tear of walking upon the front of the foot, which often is a cause of blisters. The tongue should be broad, and closely stitched all up its sides to the boot, so as to keep out snow or water.

Very warm gloves are to most men necessities, to save the fingers from being frost-bitten, but through which it is possible to cling to rock and stock. A bag for all four fingers, with a lateral pouch for the thumbs, answers best, as the fingers remain much warmer when not separated from one another; it should be made of hare-skin, with the fur inside. The iron fastenings of the axe-head to the stock should for the same reason be cased in leather.

Spectacles should be of a dark neutral tint, and protect the sides as well as the front of the eyes; the best form is fitted with glasses of a conchoidal shape, which effect this. Opera-glasses are very useful in searching for a track, or surveying rocks, &c.; they can be used when the hand, through cold or exercise, is not steady enough to hold a telescope. Cold cream or glycerine, if rubbed over the face once or twice during the day, prevents all pain from the burning action of the sun—for which purpose a vei alone is not sufficient. Calendula—like arnica, a homœopathic remedy—can be applied to bruises where the skin is

abraded, when the latter tincture might be dangerous. Tea is often not to be obtained in unfrequented villages, especially on the Italian side. Liebig's extract is most useful at châlets where no meat can be obtained.

Dufour's Ordnance map of Switzerland, sold in sheets, is admirable. It may be obtained in London, or at less cost at any town in the country itself. Each sheet should be cut up in twelve pieces, and the portion which is wanted for immediate use can be carried in the pocket in a waterproof case; in this form it is much more convenient to consult in a high wind than when a whole sheet has to be unfolded, as is generally the case. Ziegler's is the best general map of the country. There are, besides, admirable local maps, such as Professor Theobald's for the Grisons, or Mr. Reilly's.

As to guide-books, I began with Bädeker, and most strongly recommend it for everything but high Alpine work, for which there is no satisfactory *guide*-book. That edited by Mr. Ball is the best for higher excursions, but frequently long historical notices of peak or pass crush out many useful hints for finding the way. It is much to be wished that Mr. Ball would bring out a condensed edition for mountaineers, giving less of superfluous and more of practical information, after the pattern, to some extent, of Bädeker's minute directions for lower excursions, although the changing of glaciers from year to year necessarily leaves somewhat to the discretion of the moment.

Gaiters, to keep snow out of the boots, are very useful.

They should be light to carry, but usually are very heavy. Messrs. Seary, of Queen Street, Oxford, have a good pattern. The waterproof should be of tweed; it is impossible to walk long in a mackintosh without oppressive heat. A flexible Leghorn or Panama straw-hat is, perhaps, for mixed fine and wet weather, the best. A spare shirt, to be carried in the knapsack, for use after the day's work, should be as light as possible; silk, or a mixture of silk and wool, forms the best material. Every pocket in one's mountaineering coat should be capable of buttoning up, and should, on an expedition, be kept buttoned, to prevent both the entrance of snow in a glissade, and the exit of articles in a fall, or in any of the unusual postures the body is forced, from time to time, to assume. It is important to be prepared against cold, which is far more dangerous than heat. A benumbed traveller, without guides, in a snow-storm on difficult rocks, is in a sorry plight. Thick coloured flannel is a very good material for clothes.

(*d*) *Precautions in preparing for, and during an expedition.*—When a considerable excursion is to be taken, all arrangements about food, &c., should be made overnight. Breakfast and provisions should be ordered (see the meat for yourself that there is enough, and that no bone is packed up), and boots nailed if needful. The axe, too, should be looked to, and no strap should be left on the verge of parting from the knapsack. For provisions; to drink, I usually take, if alone, half a bottle of cold tea, otherwise some common wine also. Many prefer to have their wine heated with spice, sugar, and lemon

beforehand, finding that they can drink wine spiced when unable to touch it otherwise. Mountaineers differ exceedingly as to what they can eat on an expedition. I have met one eminent member of the Alpine Club who could not dispense with chicken. The author, provided that there is enough, is easily satisfied. I met a gentleman at Chamouni last year (1869), who ordered nothing at all for his refreshment and support on the Col du Géant but a bottle of cold tea; but then it must be 'a great one:' and, after all, at the last moment the tea failed, owing to the surly refusal of the host of the Montanvert; but the sturdy Englishman defiantly crossed upon an empty stomach. Cold mutton, salami (sausage), and bread with butter and honey or preserve, to make it palatable under a hot sun, form a good basis. In addition, a stick of chocolate is useful in the pocket in case of unexpected hunger, and a few prunes or raisins are almost essential for keeping the mouth moist in climbing.

The corks of bottles should not be sealed in, but should be rather large, so as to afford a hold for pulling them out with the fingers, as a corkscrew often spoils them for recorking the bottle. The last item is of importance, as by attention to it a whole bottle need not be consumed at each meal, and so a lighter knapsack may be taken. Everything superfluous in the sac should be sent round when neither guide nor porter accompany a party over a difficult pass. At the same time, one should be provided against emergencies, whether of cold (by warm gloves and a comforter), or hunger, or exhaustion (by brandy), or of

accident to baggage (by string, or a spare strap). Matches and a bandage are not heavy, and may be very useful; and a piece of candle is convenient, in the event of a night spent out—for which chance, too, the provisions should be, to some extent, husbanded; although it is prudent to make the first meal a good one, for many cannot eat when they grow tired later in the day. Bottles should be wrapped in a comforter, or something soft, for fear of breakage, and so with eggs. In consequence of having adopted this precaution, Mr. Trueman and I, after our fall on the Trift (p. 116), lost none of our wine, tea, or eggs, which last we carried raw as usual. One should also, on setting out, take care to be provided with small change for the purchase of milk, &c., shepherds being generally unprovided with cash in hand.

As to the rope; on rocks it is, as a rule, worse than useless, if employed; for it catches on projections, and also dislodges stones—a most serious danger to those below. But if the rocks are dangerous, or thought to be so by any of the party, it is better to employ it, to give both confidence, and also in real difficulties, support. On rocks such as compose the final arête of the Shreckhorn, where Mr. Elliott terminated his life, a rope might certainly have prevented that accident. The author, in company with Mr. Utterson Kelso, made the ascent four or five years ago, and by using the rope, and only allowing one to move at once on a dangerous place, while the rest held on firmly, no accident occurred or could have occurred from a fall. In such places the rope should be kept taut, being

paid out and taken in by the two between whom the moving person may be. So, too, on the snow, whenever concealed crevasses of importance are suspected, and in crossing bergschrunds, the rope should be kept taut.

On a steep slope of new snow, resting on old snow or ice, attention to the same point is most necessary; and in this case, the toes in ascending, and the heels in descending, should be well kicked into the snow, instead of placing the feet sideways, as is usual on a slope. And if the snow seems very likely to detach itself *en masse*, the track should be made as vertically up or down as possible; for a track *across* such a slope tends to loosen all below, and bring the whole party down in an avalanche, perhaps to be buried in it. In any case, on such a slope the greatest caution is required: the foot should be pressed slowly and firmly into the snow, the best hold with axe or stock should be made before every step, and the leader's track should be absolutely adhered to by all behind. The dangers of such a slope are, to my mind, among the greatest in the Alps. Best of all, therefore, when possible, is it to avoid them, and choose instead rock or an arête. It is especially needful to caution beginners against the too rapid descent of a slope in this state. A bergschrund often runs across the middle or the bottom of it, unseen till felt. The risk of detaching an avalanche, or of a prolonged fall, is diminished by going backwards as down a ladder, the rope being kept taut and the toes well kicked into the snow.

Bergschrunds and crevasses, when covered, are often marked by a slight depression in the snow. Such a cover

will generally bear, if trodden with caution, especially early in the day; but whenever there is only a partial snow covering, and a passage must be effected by a mere bridge of snow, this should be inspected before crossing, and only one person should be upon it at a time.

It is necessary in using the rope upon rocks to take care that it does not become dangerously frayed. There should be twelve feet allowed between every two persons, when four or more are of the party; eighteen or twenty feet in the case of three, and thirty or forty feet when two form the whole party. When a party is composed of more than five, progress is more rapid if it is divided into two or more sections upon separate ropes. Alpine belts are most useful for attaching the rope to the person, as saving the length of rope otherwise required, not cutting the body, and chiefly as admitting of anyone readily detaching himself, in order to search for the way or other purposes.

As to the use of the axe and alpenstock, when employed as a staff, they should in crossing slopes be held spike down on the snow, *above* the line of march; in glissading, behind one; where the snow is in a dangerous state, the stock should be driven in as deeply as possible; on a very steep slope, the axe-head should be driven in above one—it holds much better than a small spike, especially if the latter is a round one, instead of, as it should be, an angular one.

In case of a slip or fall, it is important to turn face down as soon as possible, and drive in the spike of the stock, or, far better, the 'pic' or blade of the axe. When

sliding on the back, one has far less power in thus driving in the drag.

The leader of a party, and still more a solitary mountaineer, should, wherever concealed crevasses are anticipated, or when crossing a bergschrund, ascertain where the snow will bear him, by vigorous thrusts of the stock; especially before leaping across an open bergschrund.

In cutting steps in hard ice, the axe should be jerked towards the body as well as driven in. This hint, for which I am indebted to Mr. Reilly, I have found most useful in saving a great deal of exertion.

Many of the following remarks as to the mountaineers themselves apply only to those without guides. There should be one in command, in all difficulties, and absolute obedience should be yielded to him as long as he remains leader. It is at once annoying and dangerous to be disobeyed in a perilous part of an excursion by an inexperienced follower: in such a matter, for instance, as keeping the rope taut when the zeal of inexperience leads a follower to press on too closely; or holding the axe above the track, when it *seems* so much easier and safer to hold it below.

In bad weather it is better not to start on a difficult expedition; though, once started, it is not always so advisable to return. Yet, above all, no true mountaineer without guides should ever be kept back by shame from returning:

> He who fights and runs away,
> Lives to fight another day.

Bad weather may be usefully employed in acquiring

practice in step-cutting and facing steep ice-slopes on the foot of a glacier. But, beware there of falling stones, inattention to which caution has lost life.

Never, if without guides, should a companion be taken who is not known to be pretty strong, and to have had at least some glacier experience. An early start is always advisable, not only in order to find the snow hard, but to leave a wide margin of daylight in case of losing the way. It is unpleasant to sleep out. Châlets should not be relied upon as sources of food or information early or late in the season: witness our excursion on the Buet. It is always well to enquire if the cows have gone up to them, previously to reckoning upon them in unfrequented places. It is wise to sleep as near to one's work as possible in comfort, but hay in a cave is dearly purchased at the expense of a comfortable bed, unless a very considerable climb on a hard day is thereby saved. If one of the party is advanced in years, or not strong, a mule may well be taken as far as it can go, that the traveller may be fresh when difficulties are reached. Exhaustion produces an indifference to life for one's self and one's party, which is scarcely credible till experienced. Easy peaks and passes should be attacked before more difficult ones.

It is well to have one or two preconcerted signals, in case one of a party goes forward in search of the way. Every shout should be acknowledged, if heard. This I have found to be a rule of considerable utility. Short cuts away from a track given on the Ordnance map are especially useless on glaciers. One must be prepared for

great deceptions as to distance, especially in misty weather. Halts should not be too frequent, or they waste time which may become precious.

It is important on soft snow to follow neatly in the leader's steps, not only as stated above, on dangerous slopes, but also in general, so as to avoid crevasses, and to save fatigue, and not to spoil them for those behind. Cutting steps in ice takes a very long time, and it is desirable, when possible, to avoid the necessity by a détour, if not very long. When it is needful to cross or follow the usual course of avalanches, it is wise to hurry on; yet not so fast as to exhaust any member of the party, who would thus be disabled from escaping by activity, if surprised by a fall of blocks. Great pains should be taken in ascending, and still more in descending rocks not to dislodge fragments on to those below. The author has to regret both the infliction and affliction of considerable injury by carelessness in this matter. It is advisable to test each piece of rock to which one clings, or on which one treads, if the rock is friable, before trusting to it. A habit of this sort is troublesome to acquire, but becomes in time a second nature.

Never should anyone be tempted on a bad arête into climbing it straddle-legged. The author must own to having experienced, on more than one occasion, the wish to do so, but the process would take too much time and too much trousers, and more, would deprive one of the moral tonic which erect walking affords. But when, as in an ice-fall, time may be saved by sliding in such fashion

down a tongue of ice, by all means let it be tried. Rocks, slopes, and arêtes usually look worse at a distance than when close at hand; but not always.

In descending rocks without guides, it is better for the most experienced to precede, in order to choose the way; the rest moving one at a time, if the difficulties are considerable, with the second-best man last. On very bad rocks the leader can, after unroping every one, rope one at a time to himself, and lower them into safety, himself descending last, without help, unless from the top of an axe or stock held as a step for him by those below. So in ice-falls, or wherever experience is required to find a way, where the leader alone can see enough to be able to judge, he should be the best man; but in almost all other cases, the ablest mountaineer should come last in descending, so as to give support by the rope to those below when needful. To be dragged by a rope beyond one's pace is very unpleasant; and so, too, when any one has fallen into a crevasse, he should not be jerked at by the rope, but should be allowed to pull himself out by it. Indeed, the rope should always be slacked a little to a person in a crevasse, that he may the more easily extricate himself.

The above rules are offered obviously as subject to modification in special cases; but all are suggested as the result of experience and trial.

It is impossible to be too careful, though it is not necessary to go slowly in consequence. But when without guides, every precaution that would ordinarily be taken should be attended to with redoubled care.

(*e*) *Finding the way.*—There are but few directions that can be given under this head; common sense, clear weather, a good map, and a compass, are the main requisites, but the following hints may be of service. Especial pains are often required to take the right track out of a village; as the traveller mounts, paths are fewer. The answers of peasants to enquiries must always be received with caution; sometimes there is an intention to deceive those who are supposed to be spoiling the trade of the guides (see the Weissthor, p. 31); and generally few in the villages, except guides and hunters, know the mountains well enough to give trustworthy information. Many guides even cannot give the right names to peaks; thus, at Orsières, we were deceived into thinking the Col du Tour (p. 122) much easier than it really is, by a man who had crossed it as porter, and who professed to point out from the village both the Col itself and the Aiguille.

The very best map of the district should always be procured. The magnetic declination, which at present is considerable, must also be remembered; for the needle of the compass, instead of pointing due N., points about 20° to the W. of N. at present.

It is well to reach the summit of a pass as early in the day as possible; so that, in case clouds should rise later, a view of the descent may have been gained. Whenever possible, survey the peak or pass before trying it; decide on the best route, and keep to this in the actual ascent as nearly as possible, so that, even if bad weather should occur after starting, there may be a good chance of

making a way. Tracks of previous travellers are more often than not found on the tolerably frequented excursions, and in foggy weather they are of the greatest service. The climber should notice every object on his route which might aid his return if dense fog or a snow-storm were to set in.

In fog some notion of one's position may often be gained by shouting and listening for echoes, which would indicate the vicinity of rocks (see p. 147). It is especially necessary to guard against circling round and round when no landmarks are visible. When there is risk of fog supervening, a careful comparison of one's map should be made with all prominent objects visible along one's route.

A stone man (small pyramid of stones) frequently marks the top of a pass, and when one is in doubt as to whereabouts a ridge is to be crossed, a close search with opera-glass should be made for such an indication. Little heaps of stones, too, are often set up at the usual point of taking to or quitting a glacier. Shepherds, however, frequently make them for their own purposes, where they would only mislead travellers.

As a rule, in taking a pass which is at all used, the best track is to be followed; where the path forks, and the traveller is uncertain which direction to follow, a close inspection of the path for alpenstock marks should be made, or for the dung of horses or cows, and the path so marked should, as a rule, be followed. But the tracks of sheep or goats are most uncertain guides, for these animals wander in all directions in search of food, or for pastime.

MAP OF THE WESTERN ALPS

Author's Route.

English Miles. 5 10 15 20

London: Longman & Co.

On the snow a beginner might be confused by chamois tracks. They are no guide, except in great difficulties, and to a good mountaineer who would be able to follow them, where they may be the sole indications of possible escape.

The time has come for me to part from my readers, whose indulgence I must crave, and from the theme—to me so pleasant—of this volume.

In upholding the practicability of mountaineering without guides, I am well aware how entirely counter I am running to the opinion of most mountaineers, and how much responsibility a writer of such views may be said to incur. But from this I do not shrink, having to the best of my ability pointed out the conditions of success, and illustrated by my own adventures the risks accompanying either ignorance or neglect of precautions; to one or other of which causes any inconveniences or dangers I have incurred may clearly be ascribed.

The recollections of Alpine days called up to myself in writing, may, I hope, equally have cheered some at least of my readers. But the work of the Plain severs, at least for a time, from the memories as well as from the reality of the sunshine of the Mountain.

> Ihr Matten lebt wohl, ihr sonnigen Weiden,
> Der Senner muss scheiden, der Sommer ist hin.—*Schiller.*

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